



## Episode 3: Plans For The Future with Juliet Knapp

**Kris Nelson:** [00:00:00] In 2020, the future was so bright. It was the decade we had all dreamed of. Then, the unthinkable happened. A pandemic that turned culture and society upside down. Now, a year and a half later, what do five leading artists and cultural producers have to say about their plans for the future? I'm Kris Nelson, artistic director and CEO of LIFT, London's biennial festival of international theater, and this is Plans For The Future.

Joining me today from Kyoto is presenter, curator and co-artistic director of Kyoto experiment, Juliet Knapp.

**Juliet Knapp:** Hello.

**Kris Nelson:** Hey, how are you? [00:01:00] Hi everyone. If you're just joining us. I'm Kris Nelson, this is Juliet Knapp. [Kyoto Experiment](#) is this phenomenal event in Kyoto that's been going, for 15 years now?

**Juliet Knapp:** Uh, 10 years, actually Spring was the 11<sup>th</sup> edition.

**Kris Nelson:** Spring was the 11<sup>th</sup> edition. It's made a huge mark around the world and I'm so delighted you could join us for this conversation about the future, because I know that you have been working with many artists about the future and what it means.

Uh, we've probably known each other since 2018 or 2019 I think. We met in [Kunstenfestivaldesarts](#) in Brussels, you had just been appointed co-artistic director and I loved that meeting, because I had just been appointed artistic director of LIFT and it felt like, oh, okay, we are going to maybe do something special as a generation of new festival makers and festival directors. "What could we do together?" - we had those kinds of conversations, and you came



back and forth through London a couple of times. Then the pandemic put a pause on [00:02:00] the regularity of those kinds of meetings.

But I've been following the festival and I have to say for those of you joining us, Kyoto Experiment is a life source for innovative experimental Japanese artists. It's a really important platform for artists across East Asia. And for those from further afield, it's a vital way for global artists to connect with Japanese audiences and that's not always an easy thing, despite Japan being such a cultural superpower in terms of a visual performing art.

The festival actually has three platforms. There's [Kansai Studies](#), which is devoted to the entire region surrounding Kyoto, uh, the shows in the festival itself, and then [Superknowledge For The Future](#), which is this very juicily titled platform for experimental performing artists to engage with the thorny predictions of the future, and we're going to get to that in a bit.

So, if you are seeking a festival where you can see and feel the hand of the artist, like really get their signature and their being, where the performing arts collides in joyous, [00:03:00] quirky and innovative ways with other elements of the civic and social sphere, and you like a source for uncovering vital new voices, I would say Kyoto Experiment is for you. You absolutely need to know about them and follow them. This is a festival where everyone, artists and audience alike are thinking forward, and I've yet to visit, but I'm absolutely hopeful that I will soon.

So, Juliet, thank you for joining us today. Welcome here. How are you doing? How is June in Kyoto?

**Juliet Knapp:** Hot! It's quite getting quite humid now, yeah.

Thanks very much for having me.

**Kris Nelson:** It's a real pleasure.

What's happening more generally in Kyoto, in Japan at the moment, what's the landscape like for the cultural field?



**Juliet Knapp:** So the pandemic still having a big impact on what's happening here and how things are being planned for the future. [00:04:00] Japan's kind of at the tail end of the kind of third wave of Corona and the vaccine plan was a little bit slow to start for various reasons, but now about 10% of the population are vaccinated and the government is hoping that that the vaccinations will be completed by November, but it might still be a bit later than that.

One of the things that's making it really difficult, I think is that, depending on the prefecture that you're in, in Japan, the rules are different when a state of emergency is declared. And then there's also the not-clear 'tiers' of states of emergency.

Something could be announced say, for example, on a Friday, and then theaters have to, or cultural institutions have to, respond by the Monday - the following Monday, with these new regulations. So it's quite difficult to [00:05:00] read the future in terms of like, okay, if there's this many cases, then we'll have to do this set of rules or this set of rules so, it's quite random as well, the restrictions that are being put in place or have been put in place last year. So that's been difficult for us, but also I think for many theaters and venues in the city. At the moment most places have to close by 8pm, which means that includes rehearsal spaces as well.

For example, one of our venues - Kyoto Artists Centre - has a lot of studios which artists used to rehearse in, and those rehearsals normally happen in the evening. So the space is normally open until 10:00pm, but now it closes at 8:00pm - these rehearsals are cut short. So, perhaps a lot of artists that normally do part-time jobs and then rehearse in the evening are unable to use those spaces.

And then [00:06:00] we had a few theaters closed a few weeks ago and then they opened again until 8:00 PM. So it was like, some of the performances that were meant to happen three or four weeks ago were cancelled. But then the following week, the rules changed so then performances were happening again. Um, so it's very, yeah, it's just difficult to predict.

And I think part of the reason is because of the Olympics as well - the government trying to push that forward and make that happen. Obviously



because the Olympics need to happen inside various regulations about how many visitors can come to the stadium and stuff like this. So, if they change those rules, the rules for other events as well also change. So, yeah, that's made it very difficult, I think, not just for us, but for artists, public institutions and private institutions as well, and yeah and venues and spaces.

**Kris Nelson:** Yeah. And has there been support from either the city or the prefecture or the region or [00:07:00] indeed Japan as a whole for cultural structures and for freelancers, or has it been precarious as well?

**Juliet Knapp:** Yeah, there have been quite a few different grants and support directly to artists and also, for organizations like us and also theaters and they're all kind of different as well, so obviously, yeah, it takes more time to decide what to do and apply to those things. But obviously there is the support.

I think for artists, you know, some of them are finding ways in terms of money to be supported by these grants, but they're not having the opportunities to be able to show their work, or they don't know when the next opportunity is going to be. And it's been like that for quite a long time now. So it's like, even if they are okay in terms of paying their rent and they've got this money, or this extra grant, it's like, how is their artistic practice developing? Or, you know, what are they going to [00:08:00] do in the next year or whatever when it's so hard to plan or know when their the next performance is?

**Kris Nelson:** Yeah. I think it's very similar to how things are although we are kind of in this moment of rip-roaring reopening that is determined to go ahead no matter what. We're never going back, we're going to live with the virus and, I mean it's a bit... there's all kinds of ways to think about it, right? Like you can feel buoyed by that, and hopeful that the audience shares the confidence of the government and everything, and that artists indeed want to perform, because the feeling of going back and forth has been so devastating for many. And I know that you've canceled and reshaped a few festivals now, or at least one, and you relaunched it.

So you held the spring edition of Kyoto Experiment and you're planning an October edition. How's that process been for you and the artists?



**Juliet Knapp:** I [00:09:00] mean the spring edition was the 2020 edition that's meant to happen in October. So the festival normally happens for a month in October, and then we decided to postpone the 2020 October edition to spring 2021.

And then we decided this year to go back to our autumn period. So we decided to do no festival last year and two festivals this year. And I guess like, yeah. The reason why we decided to postpone last year is I think that we felt that that was a chance that the borders would open, and international artists would be able to come. Because this was in like last year like April or May, I think it was when we decided to do that. So at that time it didn't feel like this is going to be such a long journey. So that was the thinking behind that. But now, I mean, you know, there's no point I think in postponing, it's just about what you can do in the current [00:10:00] situation, because it's just impossible to read.

So it's like, that's why we decided we're definitely not postponing anymore, we're going back to our autumn edition. Yeah, I mean, just having these editions pretty close together as well, I think, we've thought a lot about how these can link and stuff. I hope it's interesting for people.

**Kris Nelson:** Do they feel opposites or do they feel they're in conversation with each other? What's that like, what does that look like?

**Juliet Knapp:** Yeah, I mean, we're still carrying on with the three programme structures that you just mentioned earlier: Kansai Studies, shows and Super Knowledge for the Future. So, I think for Kansai Studies, because it's a long-term kind of research project, it's felt like it continues outside the festival period as well. We work with a number of local artists to research a certain topic and then share in a certain way during the festival periods. So in the spring edition they did a kind of small exhibition and a [00:11:00] workshop with some local participants and I feel that kind of project has, like, you can have a bit more momentum if the periods are close together, because we are doing stuff in between. Not just in the festival period.

Also I guess in spring, even though we really hoped that we could have some international presence, in the end we were unable for any of the artists to come.



We were holding out hope for like some artists from Thailand to come. But just at the last minute the borders shut for Thailand - I think it was like Thailand and Indonesia that we were hoping for, but yeah, the regulations got stricter towards the end of the year when there was a second wave. So in the end, we had some kind of installation style video works, but we also had to switch kind of quickly, to screenings of [00:12:00] archive works as well in some cases, because we kind of held out for the option for these artists to come and it was difficult in terms of staffing and time and things to have a backup plan, essentially. So, we put all of our eggs in one basket and that sense with spring.

So, in preparation for autumn, I think, you know, we're discussing, we've discussed a lot more with each international artists, how to move forward and, I think one of the most difficult things with the festival is just being like, "how do we...", because we're an international performing arts festival, and that's also linked to how we get funding as well. So ,it needs to be international in some aspect. So it's like, when travel is so restricted, "how do we keep that international element of the festival?", which I'm sure is what LIFT is thinking about as well.

**Kris Nelson:** Very, very much, I mean, what our stakeholders want from [00:13:00] us and what our audiences want is the connection with other voices and other people around the world. And it's definitely top of mind, like, it's not just like, oh yeah, we're thinking about it. But like we're doing things. We've launched this Concept Touring project where we're trying to support artists to develop projects where the concepts travel, but they don't.

And at the same time, I know that we will be bringing people from around the world to London when we can. Especially artists and people from the global south, because their mobility and their professional livelihoods often depend on festivals like ours to invite them. So that's significant. And it's refreshing to hear that kind of steadiness around, "okay, we're sticking with the edition, no matter how it works". I think this is such a strong strategy. I mean, we're doing a season this year and we'll come back to our biennial [00:14:00] next year. So it's sort of similar.

So what's been carrying you through Juliet, in this period of time?



What's been inspiring you and on a personal level, I'm curious, but also as a curator, how are you keeping your skills sharp and your awareness alive, you know, and the fun - how are you keeping the fun alive?

**Juliet Knapp:** Yeah. Like, so it's quite, um, since we really started work on the spring edition and the pandemic hit, since then none of us have been outside Japan.

So, you know, one of the things that's important to do, I think is to go and see work outside Japan and do research and stuff, and we wanted to travel a lot more to Asia and do more research there and stuff like this. That's been difficult, but, instead of that, we decided to do more research at home. So, [00:15:00] around Japan, and yeah, yesterday the three of us just got back from a research trip to the Tohoku area, which was the area that was devastated in the earthquake and tsunami in 2011. And we visited some artists studios there, and some festival office that's doing an art festival there as well - a visual arts festival - and a few young artists that had moved there recently. So that was really interesting. And, you know, I think it's something that we wouldn't think about doing so much or have the time to do so much if it wasn't for the pandemic. So yeah. Focusing inward and, yeah, traveling around Japan a bit more and researching a bit more locally has been really interesting and inspiring.

**Kris Nelson:** Great. I mean, you described the festival to me at some point and I imagined, [00:16:00] I just got this image of how you were existing very much outside the usual structures within Japan, that you were agitating on the edge of the traditional venues, they were your partners, but also you were creating space for different kinds of performing arts or different kinds of artists to come into the theatre festival or performing arts festival space. Has that deepened or changed through the pandemic as everyone's transforming their practices?

**Juliet Knapp:** I'm not sure, it's difficult. I mean, in terms of funding, there was a lot of funding that was related to the Olympics. Now the Olympics is happening this year and a lot of that funding is finishing in some ways. So some projects and plans that could have carried on have kind of been [00:17:00] stopped because they were made in advance of the Olympics and now they've stopped, kind of thing. So, I think that's problematic as well in some ways, but, I guess in



terms of interdisciplinary, experimental kind of art, yeah, we're one of the few platforms I think that offer that in Japan.

**Kris Nelson:** And what's happening for your sister organizations?

Are they in similar places or is it different in Kyoto because of other kinds of structural funding or support?

**Juliet Knapp:** Kyoto is an interesting place because it has a lot of history of being experimental as well. It's a city that has a lot of universities and a lot of medium-sized high tech industry as well. And [00:18:00] I think the audience in Kyoto as well is often very open to new work and experimental work, as opposed to perhaps the audience in Tokyo. So, in some ways it's perhaps easier to offer that work to the audiences in Kyoto. It's something that, yeah, the previous director would also talk about and what I hear from producers, for example, who've worked in Tokyo as well. Although, at the moment, Kyoto city is on the verge of bankruptcy.

**Kris Nelson:** What!

**Juliet Knapp:** Yeah.

**Kris Nelson:** I mean I'm laughing because you're laughing, but it doesn't sound great.

**Juliet Knapp:** So it's also, it's always had been difficult. I'm not actually entirely sure... like obviously I am not an expert on what happens when a city structure goes bankrupt. But [00:19:00] one of the reasons is because Kyoto has lots of temples and universities, and also there's planning restrictions against high rise buildings, which means that the income that they get on tax through their land is not that big in the first place.

And then obviously it gets a lot of income through tourism, and that's been decreasing through coronavirus. So, in the next few years, I think it will be, yeah, it will be difficult for cultural institutions and cultural events as well in Kyoto to





be supported by the city as much. Yeah, it's going to be tighter. I think. So, I think that's another battle that is facing us in the future.

**Kris Nelson:** Well, I hope that in the wake of the Olympics, because sometimes those cultural Olympiads leave a wake - sometimes that's positive, there were definitely positive elements here in London and in Vancouver, which is another city I've been in around [00:20:00] Olympic times, and sometimes it's trickier. That plus the pandemic you might have a high cliff ahead of you to climb.

But maybe we could talk then about a Super Knowledge For The Future and Juliet I've been reading about Super Knowledge For The Future, which is, uh, just the greatest title. It's strand of programming that explores how artists can predict the future. Is that right?

**Juliet Knapp:** Yeah.

**Kris Nelson:** And that then connects society to those artists. Do you want to tell us about it?

**Juliet Knapp:** Yeah, it's kind of basically a series of symposiums and talks or workshops that deal with subjects outside the world of art, and we decide on their topics based on the kind of themes that perhaps come up in some of the performance works that we're presenting. But they're not [00:21:00] like super directly related or we try, instead of them just being a related talk, we kind of open up the theme a little bit more and make sure that that event is a kind of standalone in itself as well. And we've invited various people that are completely unrelated to the art world - various university professors or researchers, or last year we interviewed some volunteers that were doing a roof gardening project on top of a city ward office in Kyoto.

So, one of the aims is for it to just connect with various ideas and, yeah, have conversations with people who perhaps a first glance are completely unrelated but actually once we start talking, there's a lot of overlap perhaps between how they think about designing that certain space and how, [00:22:00] a scenographer thinks about designing a theater set, for example, or ways of



trying to find lateral connections between the performing arts world and other people doing completely different things.

And it's really helped us to connect with people outside the performing arts basically. And also it's helped us connect locally as well with our city, I think. So, yeah, that's been really nice as well. Just finding, yeah, new people and new connections as well.

**Kris Nelson:** That's great. And has the goal been to kind of just create a web of people that are interested in the future, interested in forward ideas, in imagining spaces? It's about community building more than it's say, a commissioning program or something?

**Juliet Knapp:** Yeah. I mean, at the moment, it's pretty open and it's about [00:23:00] finding new ideas and connecting with new people and stuff like this. But, I mean, when we first made the three programs in the spring, we wanted to have them feed into each other as well. And that's something that's gradually, I hope, happening. So, yeah. Perhaps someone that we meet through Super Knowledge For The Future will come around and be involved in the creation of a work at a future edition of the festival and stuff like this. And just having that base with them and knowing about their community and what they're doing as well, really helps with that, I think, instead of just saying like, "okay, we need to find this kind of person for this" and whatever. Yeah, it's just a way of opening up our network as well.

**Kris Nelson:** Yeah. Have there been any ideas that have come out of it that you [00:24:00] can't get out of your mind?

**Juliet Knapp:** Actually one of the really interesting talks that we had in spring was, we had a guest called Chirijin, which in Japanese means geography man, basically. He makes fantasy maps that are super realistic; he's like a fantasy cartographer. He goes to cities to research them and see how they're designed and stuff like this, and then he'll design a very real map, and some of them have been exhibited in visual arts exhibitions and stuff recently. So, we had a talk [between him and a scenographer](#) who is a real-life garden designer, but was actually doing the scenography for a work by an artist called Ayaka Nakama



[00:25:00] whose dance work kind of unfolded in this garden space. And previously she performed the work in Yokohama at TPAN [Tokyo Performing Arts Meeting], and then before that Dance Box and each time the garden space has been designed by a garden designer, not a theater scenographer. So, we had a talk with him about his experience doing scenography for Ayaka's work, and also about just his work in general as a gardener, and how he starts creating space and how he thinks about space. And then also with Chirijin about what he thinks about space, and how he imagines these fantasy cities and stuff like this.

So yeah, thinking about the theater space as this kind of miniature of something else, or how does the city, how is it designed for people to interact in a certain way or in a theater, how does that change? Especially in Ayaka's work [00:26:00] because the audience was moving around the whole time, there were no audience seats. So yeah, I think it gave new ideas about how to think about space or how people move around space and stuff like this. And, yeah. Even if you're not working in the performing arts, these questions are the same. You'll ask him the same questions, just kind of different things. So, yeah, in that way, I thought that was really great. It was a specific thing where you could see different people in different fields really overlapping and the conversation that was born there was I think, really new and interesting. If you have two people from different kind of backgrounds doing different things, speaking about... because a lot of the time people are asking the same questions, just in different fields that we don't normally talk to each other.

**Kris Nelson:** True! How wonderful to bring them together. I could see all kinds of potentials for it.

Are you imagining you will be using space differently, in the autumn [00:27:00] and as you make new festivals? Like are theaters over, you can't use them because of social distancing or, you know what I mean?

**Juliet Knapp:** Oh, yeah. I mean, obviously there's regulations that we have to follow due to the pandemic, but yeah. One of the main themes or strands that we're thinking about in programming in terms of performance work for the shows program is this relationship between the audience in a normal, like theatre black box where there's the stage and the audience seats. Yeah. How to



think just differently basically about that relationship and how to use the theater space. Even if you have that stage and those seats, you know, how can we use that space in different or interesting way that questions the relationship between the audience and the performers, and the relationship between, you know, people that are watching people that are watched, kind of [00:28:00] thing. So, we're constantly thinking about that, I think, and how to, how to experiment with that and how artists are experimenting with that. And yeah, when we commissioning new work that's one of the things that we're thinking a lot about as well, how to use that space.

**Kris Nelson:** Yeah. As you've been working with artists through all these different regulations and formats, and imagining new things, do you feel like the skills you have or what you have to bring to the table as the curator, as the sort of, the guide to bring the artists into the context of the festival, are your skills changing or your practices changing as a maker?

**Juliet Knapp:** Because of the pandemic, you mean?

**Kris Nelson:** Yeah, I guess so. Or even just perhaps as a result of the evolution of where you were, where are you three have been going [00:29:00] with Kyoto Experiment?

**Juliet Knapp:** Well, I'm not sure because it's the first time that I've, you know, planned or, you know, co-directed a performing arts festival as well.

I've only done one edition, so it's almost like for us three, we've never done a normal edition. We haven't done a non-pandemic version. So, I mean, yeah, I guess we can imagine what it would be like if the pandemic hadn't happened, but it's almost like this is our normal.

**Kris Nelson:** Yeah.

**Juliet Knapp:** Yeah I mean, I think we've got better over the last year at juggling schedules or changing projects or being like, okay. Because, you know, before I think when we were planning the programme, we had a clear structure



[00:30:00] and an idea and stuff. And we were like, okay, this is a good balance between this work and these speakers or these artists and stuff, and, you know a good international to Japan-based artists balance, or balance of kind of different genres. This is looking at the borderline between like dance and visual art, but this is more text-based and stuff like this. So, I think we had that kind of, you know, you have that ideal lineup. But then in this pandemic situation that never happens. Right? So it's almost like, “Hey, this has gone. Like, what can we do?” We need to have something that fills this gap. And I think we've just got more flexible at adapting to that and thinking of ways to, yeah, overcome that and stuff, and that really helps I think when we are three [00:31:00] people, and not just one. Even if all three of us have hit a wall or something, one of us might say “I think we are thinking too much like this, maybe we need to think more like this. Let's go away and think in this direction”, or whatever. I think that helps.

**Kris Nelson:** Yeah that’s great. What you're saying about balance and composition, the latest scenarios and all the different new challenges the pandemic has brought has definitely, uh, my relationship with the composition of what I'm imagining for 2022 is changing for sure.

And I also feel that I want to give audiences a variety of types of experiences and call them into different kinds of spaces to meet different kinds of content, and challenges, and artists. So it's like, I haven't lost the desire, [00:32:00] but it is changing.

And then the other thing that I've been thinking about a lot is what you're talking about that - your resilience with an idea – it’s about flexibility, and then the thing that we're hopefully giving to artists right now, which has this kind of tremendous amount of, “we'll catch you no matter which way you fall”.

And I think it's changing how I listen to artists as we make new work. And also probably how we talk about what's precarious, or, “what do we know? What will we never know?” Because it's Saturday and we won't find out until Monday what the government says and all of those things... But great that you've got a trio that you can make that magic with.

**Juliet Knapp:** Yeah, definitely.



**Kris Nelson:** Do you have - this is the big one Juliet - but do you have a kind of hopeful [00:33:00] vision of what arts and culture will look like?

**Juliet Knapp:** I mean, yeah. We've been talking so much about it as well, the three of us. There are definitely things that we'd like to see happen or we'd like to do going forward in the future, but there's also a lot of things that I think, you know, are problematic or problems that I think we've identified about the current situation in the performing arts, but, you know, it's not easily solved either. I mean like touring and stuff, and how artists are so dependent on international touring, but obviously the pandemic has stopped that at the moment. And also going forward in the future with issues like climate change and stuff like this, how do we deal with that? We're probably going to see less travel, but also, for young artists from, as you said, the global south who depend on or who need those opportunities, and I think it's important [00:34:00] for that to happen, for that practice to develop in that way... What's a good solution to that, going forward in the next few years, is something that we think about a lot.

Also, the fact that a lot of those touring opportunities are found in Europe, and I think there is a certain kind of work that is often presented or programmed at European festivals... I mean, not all. There's a lot of festivals that are doing super interesting things as well. But it also means that, sometimes, I think for example in Japan, artists feel like they have to create a work for the European market. So it's about, for us as a festival, "how can we do something that's not within that [00:35:00] flow that's been happening in for the last you know, 10 or 20 years?" So yeah, we're looking at looking at examples of, you know, collective directorships like ourselves and what we can learn from those, and how we can make more connections locally and with countries closer to Japan as well, within Asia.

So, we'll be doing a symposium series about these kinds of ideas as well. We haven't announced it officially yet, but, before the autumn festival, where we hope to discuss these ideas with other curators and artists and, you know, examples that we feel hold hope for the future, and what kind of direction we can go and stuff like this. So, yeah.



**Kris Nelson:** It sounds like you're making commitments already in your mind, like you're forming pathways [00:36:00] towards either innovating ways of presenting or regional priorities. But also, I'm curious about that aesthetic priority too, that you're not making things so they can just kind of “pop-over to Flanders” and do the circuit which, I think, will still exist probably.

**Juliet Knapp:** Yeah. I mean, it's a good system

**Kris Nelson:** And useful for artists.

**Juliet Knapp:** Yeah. But yeah, so it's, you know, I think it's a really difficult thing to think about, but I think it's really important. So it's not like, we're like, “okay, this is the answer and this is how we're going to solve it”. But it's something that we're constantly thinking about and pushing towards in a way, and that we have in our minds, I think.

**Kris Nelson:** Yeah. Do you have any glimmers of what it could be, how it could manifest? By that I kind of mean, is there anything that you you've got on your mind now that you could share that [00:37:00] is like - this is actually an example from the spring, I think that's an example of where we could be going?

**Juliet Knapp:** Yeah. I mean, it's still slow to develop, but I think for example, Kansai Studies is quite an experiment in terms of the way we're working with the same artist for a long period of time. And they're not producing - they're not expected to produce a performance work immediately.

So it's a pretty long process and it's very focused on the area, the Kansai area, as well. So yeah, it's interesting that it's like we're constantly re-figuring out which direction we should go in and stuff like this and, and how we should share this knowledge and stuff, and how we should move forward.

So I think there's difficulties with it as well. But I don't know, [00:38:00] yeah. So I think that's probably one of the formats that we've experimented with the most, I guess, because I think the shows program is the kind of normal presentation programme that you have, and then our Super Knowledge For The



Future is a talks/workshops kind of programme, but yeah. In terms of that, it's something quite new.

So, I think everyone in the group also feels like, “okay, how are we going to do this?” or, you know, “what's the aim of this, or what outcome should we have when?” And so yeah, that’s been an interesting process.

**Kris Nelson:** Yeah. And then you have this chance with the conference to kind of explain things to the rest of the world and then get it reflected back to towards you so that's fantastic.

**Juliet Knapp:** Yeah, exactly.

**Kris Nelson:** Do you think Juliet that there's anything that the rest of the world should learn about what's going on in Japan, in terms of cultural recovery or planning for the future?

**Juliet Knapp:** [00:39:00] Yeah. Uh, one of the things that I realized actually since working in Japan was actually the focus on how to archive work as well, and how people think that's important, which I don't think is often done so much perhaps in Europe or at theaters or... I mean, some places do, but yeah, how we're thinking about how we archive work or even talks, and then how we make that accessible, for who, and for what purpose. And I think, yeah, our main partner RHOM Theatre is also doing a program about how to archive the process of creating a work, um, and experimenting with different ways of doing that and stuff like this.

So this process of archiving and also archiving [00:40:00] mistakes as well, and having those, you know, organized in a way that will be useful for future artists or people creating work to look back on those and be like, “okay, we already tried it, somebody already did this”, especially at a time like this, I think when, during the pandemic, everyone is trying different things and trying to find the solution, I think. Having a record of those things is really important and it's sometimes a bit considered a bit boring or timely to do that. But I think it is something that's really important as well. And so it's something that we're





thinking about a lot, and it also has to do with how you use video and online and it all links to that as well.

**Kris Nelson:** Yeah. I know I would benefit from that and I know artists here would benefit from those findings [00:41:00]. That thing that you're talking about, everyone's trying to make the new thing or do the new thing, to survive or thrive or somehow, imagine the future.

When we think about the cultural reset, there's so much in that, you know. We're going to change. We're going to transform. We're going to innovate how we do things. And it does feel like it's quick to forget that everybody else is trying to do the same. So, there could be shortcuts. And I think even - it was amazing to see how by September or November last year, how quickly artists had responded and really started to get onto something new. Like, on the main. There was so much fearless exploration around the world. But the how to guides probably got lost, or talking about the practice or what they've been working on or how they got there, so it would [00:42:00] be a wonderful resource, to share that.

**Juliet Knapp:** Yeah. Just like, how can we share knowledge bases or processes in the future in terms of, I think. Our main partners or theaters and stuff like this, it is something that they're looking at doing more of in the future. Yeah. For artists as well, for young artists or students to be able to see that is I think a really great resource to have as well.

**Kris Nelson:** Yeah. Very valuable.

Great. It's fantastic to connect with you tonight. Thank you for joining us at 9:30, or 10 o'clock at night in Kyoto. We very much appreciate that, it's wonderful to have you here.

You should absolutely follow Kyoto Experiment via their [Instagram](#), via their website, [www.kyoto-ex.jp](http://www.kyoto-ex.jp) - wonderful [00:43:00] design that really, I think, encapsulates the spirit of the festival, which is about innovation and also there's



loads of joy in it and a great sense of humor to what they're doing, so please, please follow.

Thank you, Juliet. It's really great to see you today. And I hope we can see each other in person soon.

**Juliet Knapp:** Yeah. Hopefully.

**Kris Nelson:** Thank you for joining us today. This is one of five conversations in our series Plans For The Future, so do check out the other episodes where I speak with intrepid arts makers around the world. To find out more about LIFT and our work challenging, artistic, political, and social conventions, supporting an equitable rebuild post-Brexit and the pandemic, and connecting the world to London, follow us @liftfestival or visit [www.liftfestival.com](http://www.liftfestival.com). Even better, sign up to our newsletter for a monthly dose of LIFT. We promise not to bore you. LIFT is a national portfolio organization supported by Arts Council England. Plans For The [00:44:00] Future is part of our summer season and our 40th anniversary LIFT LOVES LONDON, made possible by cultural recovery funding.