

And sometimes we levitate into this ridiculous cosmic entity

Istvan Csata interviews Sacha Armel and Stefan Neville at Māpura Studios

Introduction

This interview conducted in June 2016 with Sacha Armel and Stefan Neville from Māpura Studios contributed to a ten-week research project I conducted during my arts therapy studies at Whitecliffe College. Māpura is an art space in Auckland, New Zealand which provides arts therapy and arts tuition for all ages with a special focus on autism and other special needs. To collect data, I visited the studios once a week with a group of six teenage students who had profound multiple disabilities (PMLD) and studied at an Auckland-based special school. All the clients were preverbal learners, used wheelchairs, and had complex medical needs. The aim of my research was to better understand how clients' quality of life can be enhanced through regular art interventions. For my inquiry, I used the concept of five well-being domains (physical, material, social, emotional well-being and development and activity), proposed by Felce, Perry, Maes and Vlaskamp (Felce, Perry, Maes, Vlaskamp as cited by Male, 2015, p.16). The two-hour sessions were led by Sacha and Stefan and supported by three teacher aides and me. The clients had plenty of freedom for self-expression within a tailor-made and repeated structure.

Istvan Csata: So the reason I wanted to grab an opportunity to interview you is because I'm working on an assignment to have a look at how art in general, and of course art therapy, can contribute to the students' quality of life. For this, I'm using a specific questionnaire that is edited around domains and sub-domains, based on what people have researched about quality of life. But before that I really have to ask, could you say a bit about yourself? What are your credentials from your own perspective? How do you regard this group of students that you work with? How do you see yourself?

Stefan Neville: At the top of the list I'm a musician and I have been since I was 16. I've been creating and performing and recording music. And I'm 41 now, so that's a long time. One of the things that come with being the sort of musician I am is that you don't make a living from it, so I always had to keep myself afloat with odd jobs and things. And one of those part-time jobs I started doing was support work for the IHC [Society of Intellectually Handicapped Children] about five or six years ago. I sort of took to it, and especially took to it in being able to do creative things with people there. And through that job I became a qualified community support worker. I did lots of training. There are all these certificates, and various things – none of which are popping into my head right now.

IC: And you cannot really pinpoint after these training courses and years what you are? Or are you saying you are a musician who works with these special people?

SN: Yeah. I was doing all that in my old job, but I was also driving people around and doing toileting, all those things – personal care. And I used to bring people here to what was then Spark, and peep in the window and fantasize about working here [laughs]. And I came and volunteered and seemed to fit in.

Sacha Armel: And they went, "Hold on, you do music? Oh really? Great!"

SN: "Come and do this!"

IC: What about you Sacha?

SA: I have a fine arts background, teaching art in high schools to make money. I think I did a year of psychotherapy. I did a couple of years of psychodrama. I did a couple of years of stuff with Suzanne, who was our director in arts therapy, which was dance and [visual] art and has got that kind of transpersonal focus. And then... this is a hundred years ago [laughter] when I was 20, 23, about then, I started working here and teaching art. I think it's the culture of this place that makes you [begin to?] fall in love with the people here. I think I fell in love with the people here and the way that they made art, and their different perceptions, and it allowed me to kind of be someone different, to think differently and use those sensing and more intuitive kind of functions. You know, someone comes up to you and goes, "What do you need? Oh I can see your eyes are lighting up. Okay, we'll do this – this colour choice or that..." That's the thing.

So it's been really cool working here. I'm not an art therapist, but I've worked with art therapists and alongside art therapists, and I think that through the

nature of working with these people, you can't teach art in a traditional sense. You have to think about their needs, and think about who they are, and have a degree of sensitivity and respond from that place. So I don't [see myself as a regular] teacher. I don't know whether I'll probably ever be one to fit into institutions... [Got to do] your thing, really.

SN: Yeah, it's not like lessons, eh [laughs]? It's an incredible thing, even just sitting with someone, and seeing what happens. Sit with them and see what happens – something will happen, eh?

SA: Yeah!

SN: It's kind of hard to talk about, but it's that simple sometimes: have some materials around and some sort of starting points...

SA: Yeah, "What's your gig? What's your interest? How can I access you?" really, eh?

SN: Mmm.

IC: There are five basic domains, and my questions are around this. The first one is physical wellbeing. What do you do here that can help enhance the students' mobility?

SA: I guess, like touch – so activation through touch. Bringing awareness to those different parts of the body. So there's a thought, "I'm touching your fingers; these are your fingers".

SN: Yeah, we try to connect with the whole person and not just the mind – the mind and the body, which leads on to, "What can you do with your body?" And then you try things out.

SA: I think, also, some kind of manual movement as well. Yes, they have their own movement, their own tics [idiosyncratic movements]. But there's something... I don't have the technical language, and I'd be really interested in it, to know that kind of different stuff. But kind of manually moving, so, "I'm moving my shoulder. Someone's moving my shoulder and there's a space in my shoulder," or, "That connects to my chest". So there's body awareness. And then there's touching, kind of manually moving; and then the encouragement to move with music. And I think music gives that extra desire to move. Like S., moving her hands and her head and her feet.

And also, I guess with the art-making, I do the art-making to create that sense of movement too. Yes, we've got this long [brush] and in order to make the paint move you need to move your arms. So I think physical movement is important, as well as the holistic side of things.

SN: I read something just the other day about bits of theory about how they moved those giant stone heads on Easter Island. It's impossible for humans to move them. But there's a theory that they used

music and did it rhythmically. And I think someone attempted it and did it. Having a rhythm and music gave it that extra something that they could do it, that it was possible. Isn't that interesting?

SA: The momentum of sound.

SN: Yeah. And the rhythm means everyone is doing it, giving their effort, at the same time. And I'm sure there's even science involved, which might be irrelevant to your question [laughter].

SA: There's also that thing of watching someone else move, right?

SN: Yeah.

SA: So, "Yes I can't move my body, but I'm watching someone else move, and I'm watching their limbs move," and there's something that's supposed to ignite in them.

SN: Yeah. You're watching someone move something and you're thinking about doing it yourself.

SA: Yep, so there's that kind of response.

SN: And even that, just thinking it probably stimulates something in the body.

SA: Yeah, it sends those messages.

IC: The next question is really connected to this one. What do you think are the benefits, health-wise? And I'm not referring particularly to spirituality here... just in terms of health, what do you think?

SA: Joy, joy [laughs].

SN: Definitely.

SA: Yeah, and that sense of wellbeing. Creativity gives that to us, doesn't it? To engage in that process, to make your own decisions, to have that visual stimulus and [colour] and sound.

SN: Yeah, there's so much to it. If you really like order and you can put some things in a line, that can make you feel great. If you're frustrated you can hit a drum and release some of that frustration. If you're happy you can yell your head off and express it.

SA: I think being creative is something that we all share, and that's what makes us human, you know? It enriches our lives.

SN: Yeah, there's nothing like seeing what happens; something happens and you're reflecting on it. I just think it's just magical [laughter]. "Oh look what happened, look what we did. Wow!"

SA: Like that thing today!

SN: Like this today. None of us knew what was going to happen. We just let it happen and then we all got a buzz out of it. It's so simple; it's so direct.

SA: And watching the look of satisfaction, like S. looking at it at the end, just like, "Mmm!" And often that sense of ownership... I know one of the girls in here, when she first came, she would lie on the ground and just bang her head on the floor.

And I think I lay down there with her and was just trying to work out, "What can we do, what can we do with you?" And then over time I might have picked her up and carried her [laughter], and carried her physically with my body around the room, responding to the music. And over time... and that's the thing, time with these people, eh? So over time, she began to come into the room and move herself. She danced herself. And there was this moment where I did a piece of art with her and she wasn't verbal but she looked at the artwork, she banged her chest and she had tears in her eyes and she went, "Mmm mine! Mmm mine!" So there was ownership: "This is my art work. I made this with my hands. I moved to the music with my limbs".

SN: Those moments are just astonishing.

SA: Yeah.

IC: *That's very startling. Right, I have to move on... The next domain is social wellbeing, and the first sub domain is communication. So what do you think? What do you do here, and how does it contribute to enhancing the students' communication?*

SN: It definitely communicates the abstract stuff. All the things that are hard to put into words: connections, collaboration, working together on something that's outside of yourself...

SA: It's asking for choices. Choices are a really big one, for these guys, eh?

SN: Yeah, and having a say. We stir up this process, but everyone gets a say in it.

SA: Also, the acknowledgement of their communication styles, eh? "Yes, you know? Oh, you make that sound! You sound like that [laughter]!" So you're kind of enriching their sense of wellbeing. Again, it connects back to wellbeing. You understand me. You are making some effort to communicate how I communicate. It's a different culture. Perhaps it's a different culture.

SN: You're learning each other's languages.

SA: They have such a different culture, a different language, yeah. And there's whole sections of society who know nothing, and who miss out on that level of communication.

SN: I think that ownership and that pride of having achieved something... like making artwork and you stand back and you can look at it and say, "I did that," or, "We did that". So there's a connection and an empowerment in all those things, if that makes sense?

IC: *Absolutely. Awesome. The next question is about basic security, and I'm going to elaborate on it a bit. Literature says that secure attachment with a sensitive responsive parent or other person has a great impact on the quality of life of people with*

profound multiple learning disabilities. For each of these people, it seems to be extremely important that there was someone who understood them, knew their signals and their likes and dislikes. So with basic security, what do you think about this in your work?

SA: Gosh, of course.

SN: That's true of everyone, isn't it?

SA: Yeah it is.

SN: It's people who know you and understand you – that's essential. In the job I guess you're getting to know your students, and being consistent with them...

SA: Yeah, I agree, it would be with everyone. But I guess this is the sector that you're researching, so it's difficult for me to say. It would be all that basic kind of mirroring and, "I'm okay," and eye contact – all those things that I think that the mother is supposed to do. And holding, touching is supposed to provide that sense of being safe and cared for. So if you don't have that early beginning, then what do you have?

SN: I would hope that people coming here feel secure, have the security that enables them to feel that they could do anything – like make a weird noise and throw something. I'd encourage anything with these guys. I don't know what the rest of their life is like, if they get that opportunity. I like to think it gives an open: "What do you want to do here?" and that enables a lot of the stuff we do.

SA: I guess one of the things I've noticed with this may be the time – it takes longer than it usually would. So maybe there's a relationship between the early mothering and mirroring and now, so that it takes longer to find that trust and safety. And so with this group we always go: at the first session of the term it will be [laughter]...

SN: [Flat].

SA: The second session in there'll be a, "Rrrrr"; third time in, we're there; fourth time... So it's that whole group process. But I have noticed that with you guys... that the first group that came back, and we [had] worked with them the previous year? And they were there. We didn't have to wait [for the] second or third session in.

SN: That's what's happening now isn't it? Everyone is really comfortable when they're coming.

SA: Yeah, they know the routine.

IC: *The next question is maybe a little bit hard: what do you think about family bonds? How can your work enhance your clients' bonding ability, skill, to create stronger bonds with their own families? Or does it positively affect the family in any way?*

SN: I believe, yes, of course, absolutely, even if it's as basic as, "Here's some art that I've made,"

and you show it to your family. That's got to be a positive, enhancing thing. I imagine some families might be amazed at what they can do. I would hope that.

SA: I feel genuinely that, yes, it is valuable for them; it is valuable for them to come here. You make something, and it doesn't stop there – it just keeps affecting the world.

SA: Yeah [laughs], I've seen your stuff there.

IC: *The reason why I think that is the case is because of the space you create, and then when you invite the students, eventually the sort of product that they make is congruent with that space and the parents actually recognise which artworks were created by the kids and which were just made by the staff. They just know that's the real thing, and they treasure those artworks when they come here.*

SA: It's the real thing.

SN: [It's pure].

SA: Yeah, "My fingers were in that. I felt that, I moved that sponge!"

IC: *Yes, they just know that. The next question is quite a biggie: It is about the social relationships. So students leave Māpura, they go home, they go to places, S. shouting in a shopping mall... What do they take from here, from you guys and the art, this workshop feeling, this community process, back to the world where they deal with all sorts of people?*

SN: That's hard because we only see them here.

IC: *What's your take on it?*

SA: It's an interesting thing because outside there is the whole "normal context" of operating in society, and the expectation that we behave in a particular way, right? So what we do here is we don't say, "You behave like that and stop blah blah blah". We encourage who they are. I'm not sure that we're going to help with that [laughter]. Maybe we're helping in that this is another context that is different from school, it's different from home, which was the idea of the programme starting up: transitioning from this place, coming into relationship with new people. Me and Stefan, we don't see them all the time, and [they're] okay with that – so pushing boundaries of experience and being safe in those boundaries being stretched. So maybe it helps in that way.

SN: We could be an example, a different place in society. And if we exist then there are all different kinds of places and behaviours, and social norms. And setting an example of difference, I think, is a really healthy thing.

SN: You all affect each other and expose each other, refract each other.

SA: Yeah, yeah. To take the context of what they do here into a gallery space, into a public space, into quite a conventional space.

IC: *I definitely agree totally about what you bring up. This is an opportunity for the students to spend time in transition. Of course they build up a sort of expectation that, "Oh, we go to Māpura" – I'm sure there are memories. They build up relationships, but it's always new, with new challenges.*

SN: Before I worked here, I was at [an organisation which provided support for people with intellectual disabilities] and I'd bring people here, so I would see them come and go from this place. And [it] was quite a challenging workplace. We had some really challenging behaviors, and some of our guys who were really challenging would come here, and they would never have any issues or problems when they were here. They would come back and they'd be proud and they would have something to show and share.

SA: So they come back in a good space.

SN: Yeah. And for instance, if they couldn't come it would ruin their week. And that was one of the reasons why I wanted to work here: it was seeing what it meant to them, seeing the work they would bring back, but also just seeing the satisfaction and the pride and the empowerment that they would come back with.

SA: I used to work [at] the prison for people with disabilities. We used to have a guy that would come from there, and he would have two guards that would sit either side of him. And he would come and make his artwork with the two guards, and then they'd take him away. And apparently it was a prison [where the people were sentenced to a term of imprisonment or detention]. He'd come in, go into this beautiful space, make his work, and then leave again, and then he'd come week after week. And over time, then it dropped down to one care person, and then he'd come on his own.

IC: *That's powerful, gosh. On the other hand, you can see in the world that art is not serious – why spend money on art [laughter] when we have to finance the prisons? Yeah.*

IC: *People with profound multiple learning disabilities need a lot of individual attention. I feel that every time the kids come here they're very well attended, and they get heaps of attention, acknowledgement from you. I don't know if you can add any more details on top of this that we haven't mentioned before; maybe if you dig into your mind, you will think of some?*

SN: It's a nice class-size for giving real attention to each person.

IC: Sacha mentioned that when we had that sort of challenge, when we had two classes here, fourteen students instead of six which seemed to be where it reached a threshold.

SN: Yeah, it spread it thin.

SA: I think it's that kind of thing where you're holding people in an energetic container, aren't you?

SN: Yeah.

SN: You're really drained when you're holding a big group. And it's not even holding them, because you're kind of switching between modes: This person needs this attention and this person needs this attention, which is true in the Carlson class, but at the same time there's a bigger thing, holding everyone. And everyone likes a bit of attention.

IC: Can I link in another question here that feels connected? This one is about social participation and about the group work. Do you think that the kids contribute to each other's lives for the better? Do they have different eyes to see each other during the session?

SA: We had this experience once where the group came, and someone had a seizure and she left. And the whole energy of the group went, "Whoom!" And I went, "Wow, these kids really care. They really care about their friend". And it happened not once but many times. And you would have seen this, I imagine?

SN: Yeah, even if someone's just a bit distressed for a moment, you see the group... There's a... what's the word?

SA: Empathy. Connection.

SN: Empathy and community.

IC: And how does the art facilitate this? What do you think?

SA: I guess through the process of working through together, collaborating together, there's a timing, a sharing. There isn't the same kind of energy when they're only doing their own work.

SN: All in together.

SA: Yeah. So it is quite fascinating

SN: And at the end you get a visual representation of that whole process. Someone can go, "I did that bit, and my friend did that bit".

IC: Before the session, I mentioned to Sacha that we took the Forest [group art work] back last time. It's in the foyer now, so someone who enters the school, that's the first thing that they see. And my point is, you can see at the first glance that it's a group work. That's very powerful. You just can't make the mistake and say, "Oh that's just one guy working on this".

SN: It's not a singular vision.

IC: It's all different stuff, but brought together.

SA: Yeah, it's interesting isn't it? Like when you look at that tree, there's clay pushed into the branches, there's things tied around, there's things connecting, and all the different little creatures are all different inside it. So you get a feeling of process through looking at it rather than it being a finished product all neatly made.

IC: Yes, that's a good one. My next question is about engagement... What's your take on this?

SA: I feel like that's what we're all about, engagement. Whatever it is, however it is, how can we get some sort of response? And I guess where it comes back to is that kind of sensory thing: we've got soft, we've got hard, we've got dry, we've got scratchy, we've got all these materials where they can have an experience. And we can go, "Ah, they responded to that one, but not to that one; we'll use that one again". And then over the weeks... Like I'm just thinking about M. Oh, he's so beautiful eh? And just watching him open, open. And what was really interesting about that group is that at the end of every session all of them were singing. You'd play the ukulele and all of them were singing by the end of the session, that sort of sweet humming, you know? Because I looked back through these documents and went, "Oh my god, they were all singing at the end of the session!"

SN: And one thing might work for one week and will never work again [laughter]. But when you get engaged with them, you know it; it's unmistakable. You get the focus, the attention. Like last week S. came over and watched me making the music, and she was just really engrossed in it, and it's just wonderful.

SA: And also telling us, "No, I don't want to do that today! I'm not going to make any artwork. I'm going to make noises until you park me next to Stefan [laughter]". The amazing time that C. got that new Tobii [eye-tracking] machine, and I said a poem, and she went, "That was cool. That was cool," on her new [Tobii] machine. And with all of the art-making stuff she's like, "This is boring. This is boring [laughter]". So even though she was saying that this was boring, it's a response and she's saying what she thinks and feels; and, hey, how amazing to be able to express that. And it was good feedback for me because it's like, "Oh yeah, we've done this with you already. I forgot. It would be boring for you [laughter]".

SN: We often get: close the eyes, head down. That's removal isn't it? But for people to say, "That's boring" – they're still here.

IC: My next question is about choice making...

SA: I guess you have to make a space for these students to make a choice. And you have to provide

those choices, but in them making that choice then it's about ownership and 'mine'. So choice, I think, is really fundamental...

IC: And I can see that you guys are so good at these things. You're very sensitive about the context and are very talented in using different modalities to amplify that sort of choice-making, which is often a little blurry [laughter].

SN: I think often there's a bit of spontaneous chaos that happens, but that's a kind of a choice too.

SA: I think that's fundamental, isn't it, spontaneous chaos? Because if things become too rigid then you close down the magic.

SN: Yeah, that's it. Sometimes doing anything, the most random anything, will start something or have a consequence or have a result.

SA: Yeah. It's sort of fascinating too because we're taught that if you provide the expectation then the expectation will kind of be met. But in this there is no expectation. Whatever choice you make is perfect because it's your choice, and in not having any expectation there's space to find out what is.

SN: Yeah, it's experimentation; it's trial and error. I always feel there's pure creativity without any kind of ego or any pretension – you throw it all up in the air.

SA: And I think it's that thing of transformation too that occurs in the processes, like the process of printmaking: You put your things on, you pop it through the press, you don't know what it's going to look like until you take the star off. So there's always this process of transforming one thing into the next thing and discovering – that is discovery.

SN: And the journey... to be cheesy. But it is.

SA: Just the journey. And the rituals... I know sometimes that we laugh about the music, the trance.

SN: It's always quite ceremonial eh? And sometimes we levitate [laughter] into this ridiculous cosmic entity [laughter].

IC: How can I report about these things?

SN: Do you feel that? Do you think the guys feel that?

SA: When J. [volunteer] came she said, "I don't know what happens to me but when I come here, I just become someone else".

IC: She really enjoyed it.

SN: It really unlocked...

SA: So maybe it's not just for the students, but also for everyone – also for the support people.

IC: Unfortunately this is not on my list, this discussion, but actually you tap into the spiritual realm... I cannot say it any other way, but that's what it is. And it's very deeply ingrained in all of us; it's just there, the primal scream. We came from that background and that's why it works so well.

Do you think that through your work, the students feel that they influence the world? First, do they influence the world or do they influence it in a better way than before, or are they more encouraged to influence the community or their environment? Are they invited to influence? Are they invited to be more present? Expression?

SN: I think there's a feeling of participation, participating in the world, in the community. I think that's something that creativity really brings in. I know it's brought me a lot in that I'm participating and contributing to the greater good – to more than me. I might feel like I'm a worthless piece of shit, but if I've made something that's always got to be a positive thing. I believe that completely.

SA: That's cool. I reckon people who come here, they have a developing sense of identity that is art-based – it is as an artist and within the context of being here. We have here, this guy here who did the blue thing. He has a couple of words. One word is "brown", and he might acknowledge you and say hello. But he comes in, he sits down, he gets his paintbrush out and his whole aura breathes, "Artist. I am an artist. This is what I do".

SN: And he gets down to work eh?

SA: Yes, and he gets down to work, collects his paints, and doesn't [say anything].

IC: That sort of a dedication to this creative work is really influential.

SA: It's a sense of self.

SN: Yeah, identity.

SA: I think it is a development of the ego in the world isn't it?

IC: Yes, the positive side of the ego.

SA: Yeah, the positive side. So it's all kind of linking back to wellbeing, really.

IC: I think we've reached the very last question now. It's about emotional well-being. Has the students' self-esteem, their self-image, been enhanced? Or has their level of self-actualisation been enhanced?

SA: Yeah, it's also in another context isn't it, that idea of self-actualisation.

SN: I believe that completely too. What can I say about it?

SA: I think it is like what you just said about your own art practice – that is pretty much self-actualisation?

SN: Yeah, on a superficial level, the world can see a person, and they've made an artwork: "Oh that's cool, good on you". On a more meaningful level, you feel that yourself. We're always looking, we're always encouraging and praising, and I'm always genuinely amazed at the things that happen here. I hope that the students feel that because I'm not

giving empty praise. I believe the extraordinary things that happen here. I hope that that will give those guys something.

SA: One of our students, L., I think she went to K. [high school] many years ago... Her artwork is on the wall. She said, "I'm not a bloody vegetable". "So the world might see me in this way, but -"

SN: "Look what I've done that says otherwise."

SA: "I made that; that's in a gallery."

SN: And you can't argue with that - it's like, "See!"

IC: *There is a lot of exposure in the culture to verbal messages, such as social media, and commenting. But I wonder about the congruent exposure when you actually show yourself as a non-verbal person. How do you actually put it in writing... and it just came out with what you were saying: "Myself, I did this. I was brave enough in this place with Sacha and Stefan to show who I am".*

SA: Yeah. In that document that you gave me, it talked about a full-body glow [laughter].

IC: *That's right.*

SA: And I was like, "Yes, we see that all the time!" It's like they don't have to say, "Yes, it's good! Yeah, I like that!" They're glowing inside out. And I saw that today with S. at the end of the session. And I see that with C. over and over. And there are moments of it all the time. When he told us his joke, his delight of [us getting it] [laughter]...

IC: *That was him, gosh [laughter].*

SA: Yeah. Maybe it's that level of authenticity, where you were saying you respond to someone's work; it's not shallow or empty words, it's real. There's an authentic wow!

SN: Yes because your body says it, and your eyes say it.

Sasha: Yeah, that internal, "Whoosh!" glowing inside out.

SN: It's so much more than just words.

SA: In fact, I was just going to say there's something about perception there too, and passion. There's a passion here for the arts that is beyond conventional ideas, and that you are able to perceive this in others. Or you're able to perceive that the process is just as important as the end thing...

IC: *My bonus question is about positive affect. Maybe that would be nice to conclude with. Overall, the percentage of positive feelings that the students would take from here during the session, maybe it would be nice to have a statistic about this - maybe starting at 10 percent, or 25 percent?*

SA: I always say about this class, and I have since we started it: it's my favourite class of the week. I love it.

SN: Are you talking about our satisfaction?

IC: *No, the students. I'm not interested in you [laughter].*

SA: Hey, look, I'm feeling that good [laughter].

SA: I think that there are some times when we haven't worked as sensitively as we could have. And I've noticed that people have left. But I think there's that moment in a circle right at the end where everyone's standing there and actually no one wants to leave, or it's only broken by the cymbal, "Brrrrr, now it's time to go home". So I definitely think there's a charge, there's a connection between people, and a charge. So I think it's positive. And I was sort of joking about it being my favourite class... I don't think that I'd be feeling like that if people were leaving feeling bad.

SN: Yes, that's absolutely the truth. You're dead right.

SA: Yeah, I think it is. I think it's positive.

SN: One of our colleagues just said to us before - and she's never witnessed this class before - she said, "You must be exhausted at the end of that". We both said, "No we're not. We're kind of charged and happy [laughter]". And that's quite a contrast to the other classes that we do, which again is a testament to the success of it.

SA: I think it's the multi-modal thing as well, and the group participation/engagement is kind of paramount to the experience.

SN: I've never thought of it like this before. It blows my mind. That's really cool that we wouldn't feel as great as we do if they didn't, if they weren't getting a good feeling.

SA: Because we co-create this experience.

IC: *And I can confirm that I definitely always feel that they're sort of waiting at the end: "Oh, and that was it? It's finished?" [laughter].*

SN: It's true.

IC: *And you are working out of the social boundaries, and that's why you are very [cool]... I'm [flattered] that you are just showing yourself as you are, and the kids just as [they are]. You know, like sky is sky, earth is earth, Sacha is Sacha, Stefan is Stefan. So there's no sort of play-acting.*

SA: It's not a performance.

IC: *It's not a performance, life, yeah. Thank you very much.*

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