

## **Participants as artists: co-producing creative pathways to care and health equity**

**Kunle Adewale: Nigeria/UK**

**Maitri Gopalakrishna: India**

**Rainbow Ho: China**

**Phil Jones: UK**

**Nisha Sajnani: Canada/USA**

Well before the crisis of care that characterized overburdened care systems during the recent pandemic, co-production, as a concept and practice, was taking hold in health and care systems. Simply put, co-production involves making something together. In the context of care, co-production has come to refer to a way of working that involves people who use health services, carers, and communities in an equal partnership which engages groups of people in the earliest stages of service design, development, and evaluation. Co-production aims to acknowledge that people with ‘lived experience’ of a particular condition are often best placed to advise on the kind of support and services that will make a positive difference to their lives.

This panel brings together the authors of *Participants as Artists* (under contract, Cambridge University Press) to discuss how current research on co-production in the arts and arts therapies is revealing new pathways to addressing growing inequalities. Panellists will draw on their own cultural contexts to weave together three strands of research on health inequalities, co-production, and care practices involving the arts towards illuminating creative pathways to address the social factors that underlie good health and wellbeing. We will argue that looking at care practices involving the arts through a lens of co-production involves understanding participants as ‘artists’ in their own right, engaged in co-making and co-creating the conditions and outcomes of care.

## Biography

**Kunle Adewale** is a social development practitioner, a renowned Nigerian international artist, a global leader, and arts in health practitioner based in Manchester, United Kingdom. He is the founder and Executive Director of the Arts in Medicine Projects and the Global Arts in Medicine Fellowship. Kunle's leadership has impacted over 1,000 interdisciplinary teams of students and professionals from 43 countries across the globe, and the impact of his work of almost a decade has benefitted over 40,000 people. Kunle facilitates creative engagements for diverse populations worldwide, including older persons with dementia, children, and adults with mental and chronic illnesses. The U.S. Department of State, Atlantic Institute Oxford U.K, Alzheimer's Association UK, Alzheimer's Society, and the Global Brain Health Institute, University of California San Francisco have supported his works. President Barack Obama has recognized him through the Mandela Washington Fellowship award. His global recognitions include Kunle Adewale Day in the U.S., Commonwealth Youth Award winner, and World Bank Social Inclusion Hero, among others. His international works have been endorsed by the Arts Council of England, the Smithsonian Institution National Museum of African Arts, and the Arts Council of New Orleans. Kunle has been featured on France24, Deutsche Welle, Aljazeera, the *Lancet Child, Adolescent Health Journal*, Reuters, *The Guardian* UK, and Voice of America, among others. He is a Global Atlantic Fellow for Equity in Brain Health.

**Maitri Gopalakrishna PhD, RDT** is a drama therapist, counselling psychologist, community arts practitioner and practice-researcher. She is the executive director of the Foundation for Arts and Health India (FAHI) and is based in Bangalore, India. Maitri has worked with performance, community building, preventative care, mental health support, psychotherapy, and training in a variety of institutional and community contexts. Her approach is strongly influenced by intersectional feminism and anti-oppression practice. Maitri's doctoral research looked at drama therapy as an intervention for women who wanted to explore traumatic residues of childhood sexual abuse. Maitri's other research interests are in the applications of the *Natyashastra* in drama therapy practice and the power dynamics, ethical considerations and languaging in community-based care work. Her research work

often includes arts-based participatory research methodology where performance and film are outputs of the research process.

**Rainbow Ho PhD** is Professor and Director, Centre on Behavioral Health, The University of Hong Kong. Founder and director of the Master of Expressive Arts Therapy program. She holds degrees in Biology, Anatomy, Social Work and Social Administration, professional diplomas in performing arts (dance) and movement analysis, and credentials in expressive arts therapy, creative arts therapy (dance movement therapy) and somatic movement therapy. She has been the principal investigator of many research projects related to expressive arts therapy, dance movement therapy, psychophysiology, and mind-body practices for healthy and clinical populations. Prof. Ho has received many awards, including the Outstanding Achievement Award (2015) and Research Award (2015, 2019) from the American Dance Therapy Association, the Research and Development Award from Australia, New Zealand, and Asia Arts Therapy Association (2016), the Outstanding Teaching Award (2015), Social Sciences Outstanding Research Output Award (2020), Knowledge Exchange Award (2021) and Outstanding Research Student Supervisor Award (2022) from HKU.

**Phil Jones PhD** is Professor of Children's Rights and Wellbeing and Head of Research, Department of Learning and Leadership at UCL's Institute of Education. He has given keynotes in many countries including South Africa, South Korea, the U.S.A. and the Triennial World Congress for Psychotherapy, Australia. In 2017 he was awarded a Fellowship of the Royal Society of the Arts in recognition of his contribution to the field of children's rights. He has published in journals including *International Journal of Medical and Health Sciences*, *Journal of Child Psychotherapy*, *European Journal of Psychotherapy and Counselling*, *International Journal of Research and Method in Education*, *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*, *Arts and Health*, *Arts in Psychotherapy*, *Drama Therapy Review* and *Reflective Practice*. He is series editor 'New Childhoods', Bloomsbury: appointed June 2009.

**Nisha Sajnani PhD** is an associate professor and director of the graduate program in Drama Therapy in the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development at New

York University. She is the principal editor of *Drama Therapy Review* and Co-Director for the Jameel Arts & Health Lab established in collaboration with the World Health Organization Arts and Health initiative to advance research on the health benefits of the arts and arts therapies. She has published in journals including *The Lancet*, *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, *Frontiers: Health Psychology*, *Canadian Women's Studies*, *Journal of Applied Arts and Health*, *Arts in Psychotherapy*, and *Drama Therapy Review*. Dr. Sajnani is the lead for a forthcoming *Lancet* global series on the health benefits of the arts.

### **Recent publications and conference presentations**

Doktor, D., & Sajnani, N. (2023). **Intercultural dramatherapy: Imagination and action at the intersections of difference**. Routledge.

Gopalakrishna, M. (2022). Practicing in an expanded paradigm: Case examples and ethical anchors for creative arts therapists working in community-based social justice contexts. *Arts in Psychotherapy*. 80, doi.org/10.1016/j.aip.2022.101921

Jones, P. (2021). **The arts therapies: a revolution in healthcare**. Bloomsbury.

Jones, P., Cedar, L., Coleman, A., Haythorne, D., Mercieca, D. and Ramsden, E. (2021). **Child agency and voice in therapy**. Routledge.

Sajnani, N., & Fietje, N. (2023). **The Jameel Arts & Health Lab in collaboration with WHO – Lancet global series on the health benefits of the arts**. *The Lancet*.

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