



20x20 Vision for walking in 2040 from Clare Qualmann - Transcript

My vision for walking in 2040

Hi this is **Clare Qualmann**. I am an artist and an academic and I'm calling from London, England. My vision for walking in 2040 is a slightly utopian vision; one that I would like to see rather than one that we are definitely on the path towards; that I am choosing right at the start of January 2021 as the COVID-19 pandemic in the UK is hurtling out of control again, to imagine positively and try to think hopefully, a future.

So the work that I've been doing recently relating to walking, is as part of my art practice, my creative practice for which I have a couple of long-term projects that use walking centrally within them. One is called "Perambulator": it's a walking project with prams. It was created in response to my experience as a parent, and the impact on my mobility of having children and walking with children. My kids are a little bit older now. We are not quite so dependent on the pram, but we still have one, and use it regularly, and the work that I'm doing on it right at the moment is very much thinking with my family. So thinking, when it's quite hard to work in person as an artist who tends to work live with people, they are the people I'm allowed to work with right now. So it's taking on quite a personal family related stage and the thinking and working I'm doing is very much about the pram as a tool, as a mediator of my mobility. I'm thinking very much about how it relates to my body and the body of my youngest child, who is still in it. As a way of facilitating our mobility speeding us up sometimes, but also slowing us down, as a kind of, as a way of increasing our flow through space, so sometimes as an impediment. Making some quite creative aesthetic short performances actions to re-enact those moments of awkwardness of moving through city space, as we live in the city, with the pram.

The other project that I'm working on currently it's called "East End Jam". it's an urban foraging project that celebrates the unexpected fruitfulness of the city and that's very much about helping people to notice things that are in their neighbourhood already. So learning to recognise edible plants, fruits, berries and get some courage up to pick them, eat them, preserve them, and share them, and share that knowledge.



So both walking art projects are city-based at the moment and I guess they feed into my kind of utopian vision or desires for walking in 2040 which will be a kind of huge improvement in inclusiveness. So thinking about the space that's needed for walking, reimagining the prioritisation of pedestrians, rethinking the accessibility of walking routes, not just in cities, also really as well rural, and suburban routes too. So thinking about how the huge shift to local living that the pandemic has forced recently and tried to use that as a symbol to imagine genuinely walkable places are neighbourhoods that feel not just physically accessible but also are safe and inclusive in their design and development.

I guess that Vision also includes a kind of radical hope for everyone to have enough time within their life to consider walking in a creative, playful leisurely way. So that might include imagining a world in which there is a fairer structure of leisure time, that more people have access to the space and time for play, for walking and wandering, for walking as a slow commuting, and that might include a reduce pressure of work, of working time, or the need for overwork, in order to survive.