

INEQUALITY IS

Laura Callanan on inequality and art

Laura Callanan, the founding partner of Upstart Co-Lab, explains how artists are addressing social inequalities in their work. The world is facing complex problems that will require dynamic solutions and artists have the skills to improvise and create solutions.

A conversation about inequality in all its forms.

Transcript begins.

LAURA CALLANAN: The art experience turns on your intuition. It connects you to storytelling; it connects you to your family, to your community, and in that way artists can tap into the power of empathy and channel it for policy change, and important solutions, and community cohesion in a way that other approaches just never will.

[Inequality is logo. A graphic black equal sign with an orange slash through it. #InequalityIs. Laura Callanan, founding partner, Upstart Co-Lab. A middle-aged white woman in a blue dress.]

Inequality is a structured divide that separates a group of people from the resources and opportunities that they need to achieve their full potential.

[Animated artwork by Vik Muniz, dissecting the use of natural and human resources to highlight commerce, consumption, and job opportunities.]

There are a lot of artists who care about the same sorts of topics that other social entrepreneurs are working on.

[Tatyana Fazlalizade, posters with the theme of gender injustice.]

Artists who are trying to strengthen communities and make them healthier.

[Theaster Gates, community housing installation.]

Artists who are stewarding the environment.

[Matthew Moore, large scale farming collective.]

Artists who want to reform our criminal justice system.

[Gregory Sale collaborates on a project with incarcerated individuals.]

But they're often on a little island all by themselves separated from the other robust universe that's developed between impact investors and social entrepreneurs. So the future will be one where we build the bridge and artists are connected to these other folks who share their same goals. The world is facing complex and dynamic problems. We need to be resilient. And what that requires is an ability to respond, to improvise, and to create in-the-moment, and those are the types of skills that artists can bring.

[A montage of artwork by Carlosalexis Cruz, Dustin Yellin, Sebastian Ruth, Jae Rhim Lee, Marty Pottenger, Deborah Cullinan, Mary Ellen Carroll, David Gurman, Dave Johnson, Aurora Robson]

If we can tap into that, it's a powerful force for making change in the world...and it's a powerful force for creating jobs and economic growth and opportunity for everybody.

[Inequality Is Logo. Join the conversation. #InequalityIs.]

End of transcript.