**Adele Patrick**

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Hello, My name is Adele Patrick and I'm the co founder and one of the two directors at Glasgow Women's Library - A museum, archive library arts and cultural reserves celebrating its 30th anniversary this year.

Feminist leadership is at work across our organisation. And it's from this standpoint that I want to share some thoughts with you today. Since your last strategic plan was published, seismic changes have occurred globally and locally. From Brexit to the pandemic, the resurgence of movements in response to inequalities and globalisation. Black Lives Matter, “Me Too”, the climate emergency, and turbulences characterise the cultural sector. RI James has written, the here and now for museums is paradoxical, replete with opportunity and constrain, freedoms and danger, clarity and chaos, contradictions, born of external issues that push pull and batter. And these paradoxes are in turn accompanied by a host of internal museum issues that hinder organisational courage, foresight and empathy. In this period, the so called “culture wars” have accelerated, topics that might have once been the concern of a small number of professionals working in our sector are now in the crosshairs of febrile public debate around equalities, social and climate justice - whether in the interpretation and display of museum objects, the ethics of corporate sponsorship, or who sits on our boards - These issues risk triggering social media meltdowns or public decent.

In their provocative titled book “Culture is bad for you” Dave O'Brien, Mark Taylor, and Orian Brook compelling research concludes that “culture reflects inequality/ Inequality reflects culture”, and they ask to what extent the way in the cultural sector really truly wants social justice and social change.

Fortunately, cultural resources continues to be regarded as trusted spices, and those who work in them as trusted professionals. Last year's IPSOS MORI veracity index showed that librarians were the second most trusted people at 93% after nurses and museum curators were fifth out of the 30 professions researched at 86%. Trusted more than lawyers, professors, care home workers and civil servants. Politicians polled at less than 20%.

So models of leadership what's needed now and into the future. Feminist leadership approaches advocate reflexivity, shared accountability and authenticity, acknowledging rather than being fearful of the inevitable challenges that lie ahead, supporting the continual devolvement of power, nurturing leadership and decision making across teams - in work and public spaces. I believe that we've got the capacity and skills and the trust of our stakeholders to grow into responsive just and essential resources that we need to be for all people. We are custodians of spaces that have the power to convene, and can bring together people who otherwise might become increasingly atomized and alienated from each other in the real and digital worlds. So we've got the capacity and resources to defend and strengthen both equality and the damos.

Arguably, we're less practised about having these open discussions within our organisations and our sector. The feminist leadership mantra that even hierarchies there should be an equality of voices, might help build necessary openness and bravery and these internal ecologies. Certainly dedicated space and time for ongoing honest dialogue leads to meaningful change - a culture of active listening yields radical, relevant solutions.

Catherine Mannix has spoken about the shift in from giving people a good talking - so surely a key feature of the culture war - to giving people a good “listening to”. So by provocation to interconnected elements both based on feminist leadership watchwords - authenticity & accountability. The first for your open discussion acknowledges that each cultural space in place has its own characteristics. So what will you be known for when your strategic plan concludes - and how will people describe the leadership approaches that have brought it about? The second is a very short suite of questions coined by feminist leader Lila Bello. That feeling my self reflection this year and I hope might help in your own leadership journeys.

* What does accountability mean to you?
* What can make practice and accountability difficult?
* And what just failing to take accountability look and feel like?

and finally,

* How might we capture, share and celebrate the ripples and waves of change that we will be making as accountable authentic cultural leaders?

Thank you