

## Q&A

WITH *GO ON BEING SO* CURATOR JOSIE MILES  
AND EXHIBITING ARTIST  
MICHELLE WILLIAMS GAMAKER

NEWLYN  
ART GALLERY  
& THE  
EXCHANGE

JM: *From all the experience you have had so far in your career, what advice would you give to your 15-year-old self?*

MWG: If there is a job or a role that you believe you would be good at, go into it believing that you *belong* in that position. I think I spent far too many years feeling grateful for being offered opportunities, and while I am, I now realise I deserved to be there.

JM: *What is the best advice you have ever been given?*

MWG: Difficult one. I'm not sure where I got this from, but I seem to come back to it a lot. Be kind to yourself and treat others with the same kindness you expect for yourself.

JM: *What is your latest project?*

MWG: I'm working on a film called *The Bang Straws*, which takes as its starting point the casting discrimination of Chinese-American Hollywood actor Anna May Wong. The project revisits a film called *The Good Earth* (1939) which denied her the role, offering Louise Rainer, a white actor the part. Here, I think about recasting a Chinese actor for the role. There are several echoes with *House of Women*, as I will be returning to shooting a set and casting process.

JM: *What inspires you to work with moving image?*

MWG: I love its immediacy and I love how screens and moving image absorbs us. It's very close to cinema in that respect, but allows better access in terms of slightly easier budgets! I guess, when I was at art school, it was the cheapest medium to work in. I just needed a camera and I could make my work by turning the camera on and pointing it at myself. My projects are much more complicated now, but ultimately, I could still make my work very cheaply, and that means a lot.

JM: *What three things could you never be without?*

MWG: Tricky! Laughter, conversation with people most dear to me and art.

JM: *What change would you like to see in the world that is inspired by your films?*

MWG: I guess its genuine agency for individuals of colour, one that isn't 'given' in the colonial sense, but space for artists and individuals of colour to contribute on equal terms. I still feel there are many visible/invisible barriers.

JM: *What motto do you live by?*

MWG: Probably, it comes back to my grandfather, who was Buddhist. He said, that I should be as happy to sleep on the floor as to sleep on a four poster bed, in other words to find comfort in not having much as well as having a lot. To be mindful of both positions.

JM: *What are you most proud of?*

MWG: I'm so proud of my daughters. Julia is eight and a half and really spectacularly smart, funny and talented. I think she's going to be an artist... in whatever form that takes. And my baby Wren, who is just six months and someone I really look forward to growing with and getting to know.