**Jamie Mackay**

Could you introduce yourself and say a little about your arts education context?

**Chris Nelms**

So, my name is Chris Nelms. I am a filmmaker. I have worked in industry here in the UK and Europe, and originally in Australia, where I'm from, for many years. I am also a lecturer at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. And now I'm the Coordinator for film and production with the Juniors program.

**Jamie Mackay**

And can you say a little bit about why you applied for the MEd program?

**Chris Nelms**

So, okay, yes. The masters of education program that I applied for. I found myself, I think it's very interesting, and I think that this would not be dissimilar to a lot of people who work within industry and those who work within education, I've been working in education for very long time now, and I think what you find is that you never really as an art practitioner, you never really have enough time or really enough finance to be looking at anything really, that goes beyond what you're doing. You're always moving job to job, and you're developing professionally a high skill base, and you're imparting information where you can. As an educator, there's no time. You're just constantly against it, trying to make sure that everything works and everything that happens in the back end. And I also found myself in a position, as I got older, I came into education in the later stage of my career, because I wanted to impart my skills for the next generation and I thought that was really important. But I found myself also in a position where the things that I had seen and the things that I experienced and felt that needed to be explored, I had no real avenue or no way to help achieve or to implement that. And as a big believer in education, this came up, the idea of the masters of educational, the MEd programme, and this felt very much like this is a great way to professionally grow and to grow as an educator. I thought that it would give me an opportunity to sort of like, challenge myself first and foremost, by putting myself through, for want of a better word, the rigmarole of working on a masters programme, you know, and also by really having to explore myself, to explore what I had been teaching for many years, explore what I had learnt in my skills and actually unpacking those ideas, so it really felt like an opportunity, a really great opportunity to work with that, to explore that, and to, and to really consolidate and find a way to consolidate and to sort of like explore where I was as an educator and as a filmmaker.

**Jamie Mackay**

And could you describe your journey through the MEd?

**Chris Nelms**

So the MEd programme runs, because you work in education because it is a master of education, it runs on a part time basis, which allows you to continue to teach, to educate in whatever area of education you're in. It runs over 3 years, and so that allows for a really, or that allowed me, anyway, for a really good balance between work, life and study. It was interesting because I think as well, and I think again, this might be common for practitioners coming back to it, someone who hasn't gone directly from school, and continued through a degree into masters. I think I hit immediately with this of where you have to re-educate yourself on use of language and use of scholarly texts. And I think that that was really quite a challenge to begin with. But I think for me, working with the supervisors that we had, there was very much a sort of, there was very much a sort of like feeling of nurture and to help to promote, there was a lot of give in sort of allowing and understanding that we're not coming directly into it, and so allowing students to really find their feet again. So you know, at points, it was difficult, and you feel like there's a lot more work than perhaps you've got time for, but actually when you get back into that flow you really start to unlock a lot of information yourself that was already there, but you had no way to sort of like bring to the forefront. So yeah, I think that the journey was really exciting, and just real high impact, like from an education point of view, from a sort of like expansion, mental expansion on sort of like certain ideas that I wanted to explore. So yeah, it's fabulous.

**Jamie Mackay**

And what did you focus on for your final project?

**Chris Nelms**

So again, this is an interesting one. So I think, in relation to the question just asked about the journey, I think that the journey very much illuminated what my final project was going to be. So, through my exploration, through different modules, I started to look at my students and students who are working in film and what that meant for young Scottish students in media particularly, and that started to open up more questions when I started to get through different modules, in second year, and that brought me to my final project, which I sort of, I settled on 2 primary questions, one was, first question was, the first idea was to undertake a critical investigation into representation of Scottish identity primarily within the Scottish film and television sector. And the second was to consider the potential impact of media representation in relation to economic, social and cultural identity. And that meant that I was going to try to understand where we were at this critical juncture in media in relation to what's happening here and across the world, and really start to examine and research into what these questions meant by sort of interviewing and exploring and researching a cross-section of communities at the forefront of identity recognition and getting input from industry professionals, people who work in sociology and law and sort of like really start to understand, sort of like where those crossroads started to meet. This eventually, and this was again, I really have to put this down to my mentor, who, because you initially look at a dissertation, you immediately think of paper, and one thing that I'm was really quite keen on doing was making sure that we're writing things that are accessible. They're always going to be high level. But we need to, these bits of information, need to come out, objective information needs to be seen on a larger scale. So I achieved that by through my research and investigation, culminated in a visual dissertation which also would be known as a documentary. And yeah, I think that that was the best approach I could take at the time.

**Jamie Mackay**

So what impact did this have in your practice then, as an arts educator?

**Chris Nelms**

SO coming out of the masters of education or the MEd, it's really allowed me to, first and foremost, to allow me to examine my practices and really look at the way that I have been delivering modules, to sort of like tweak certain aspects of coursework or module work to really consider what it is we're trying to achieve now to sort of like, adapt and to take onboard aspects from other practitioners and other bits of learning and modules, and to incorporate them into my own work. So, I think that's been really important to reflect media and representation through what I'm doing with coursework. It has also allowed me to consider wider educational practice and look at different emerging ideas and establish good practices. And that's again been really important. So again, I suppose, what am I saying about that? I'm saying that it's allowed me to start to develop smaller networks and really start to see what we're all doing in isolation and try to bring some of that together.

**Jamie Mackay**

You may have already answered this, but ask you, anyway, so what has changed as a result of studying in the MEd?

**Chris Nelms**

Okay, so what has changed for me since studying on the MEd? As I was just mentioning there, the engagement in wider cross-sections of industry and public sector. I think that's been really important. There's wider work opportunities, I think, when you finish a masters regardless, that's pretty straightforward. But I think also for me, it's again continually opening up further questions and I have been considering further research and examination of media in conjunction with human rights and societal engagement with media and have been starting to formulate papers and do further bits of research. And I'm looking to maybe take that on even possibly to, I would like to take that onto a PhD level and really consider that because I think that these are still burning questions. So yeah, it again, so in short, there's an empowerment. There is a sort of like a consolidation of your intellectual, not property, but your intellectual sort of like standpoints, which I think is important, and it opens, it opened up aspects and helped to again sort of reinforce the humanity that needs to exist within representation in media for me. So yeah, huge huge things. It's been amazing.

**Jamie Mackay**

Thanks very much, Chris.