

## One & Other Project

*My name is Trine Thielen and I am conducting this interview on behalf of the Wellcome Trust for Antony Gormley One & Other project, the date today is the 5<sup>th</sup> of October 2009 and the time is nearly twenty past ten, could you please state your name, age and where you come from?*

My name is Klaus Kruser. I'm 32 years old and I'm originally from Germany, now living in England.

*And how are you feeling today?*

Yes, I'm good a bit nervous but okay, yes good.

*Why are you a bit nervous?*

Just you know before going up and I've got lots that I want to, that are kind of planned to do, it's like a little show that I'm doing up there so, yes, it's just like, it's a bit like stage fever yes, so yes, that's all really.

*So what are you going to be doing on the plinth?*

It's a show that I made in 2005, a solo show that I've adapted for the plinth, I taped off the size of the plinth in my living room and have been working on it a bit and yes that's what I'm doing and like, because I also work here but I really wanted to do something that I would here even if I didn't work here [Klaus Kruse was part of the Artichoke team] so that is, that is what my choice would have been for the plinth in any way, yes.

*Can you explain a little bit more about the show, will you take any props up?*

Oh yes it's a box full of props and it's called Biosphere the show and it's about a person living in isolation and that fits really well because you are so isolated up there on the plinth. And yes it struck me that it would really fit up there, it's kind of made more for the web audience and for the audience at the bottom of the plinth just because I think some of the details you are not going to see from there or quite a few of the details yes so my aim is mainly at the web audience, yes.

*The what audience, sorry?*

The web, on line, yes?

*Oh yes, yes and are you going to involve the audience?*

Not at all, no.

*And you said you've done the show before, where did you first do it?*

I did it first at Dartington College of Art where I studied theatre and then I did it for a little festival in the East of Germany. I did a little show there and that's really ... and then I haven't done it in ages and this opportunity of the plinth came up and I thought it would fit perfectly on there so I had to adjust it to the bit because obviously the lights are on there at all times and usually I'd be working with light quite a lot during the show. I had to adjust it quite a bit but I think it would work, it will be slightly different but yes.

*What is the show about, what's the message that you want to convey to people?*

I don't know if it has ... it doesn't have pointed finger at all, it's kind of, it's how different people have seen such different things in it, it's a lot about, it's quite dark,

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it's about desire, it's about loneliness it's about the basics of life and it's about the very, the biosphere the very short kind of loop of eating, shitting and eating, yes?

*It is self-devised?*

It's self-devised, yes.

*Do you do a lot of self-devised performance?*

Yes, only, that's the kind of, I do theatre and all the is self-devised yes.

*What inspired you to do this sort of performance?*

I mean it's quite funny because I lived in a lorry for quite a bit and in a way it's quite funny I always say it's a bit like, the things of the basic kind of life style come back to you, basically you go shopping at Morrison's, you eat and then you are parked somewhere in a city, you have no loo so you shit on newspaper, you roll it up you put it in a Morrison's plastic bag then you go to Morrison's and you put it back into their bin so that's my kind of like little, I always thought I want to make a video of that actually.

*So you said that's how you lived for a while?*

Yes, so that's kind of, if you are in a lorry and if you don't have a loo inside just like a basic camper that's kind of yes.

*How come you live in a lorry?*

It's cheap for rent, you are flexible, I liked to have the lorry for transportation to be able to transport theatre props and so on so yes that's why I have a lorry, yes.

*So you are not currently living in the lorry?*

No at the moment I am in a shared house in Nunhead and the lorry is parked at the end of the lane, yes.

*So does a lot of inspiration in your work come from living like that?*

For this piece I think in a way it does, I don't think even at the time when I made it I was so aware about it I was just exploring different things and exploring rituals, the daily rituals that we go through and the kind of, in a way an inside outside the way of how we present on the outside but what is going on in the inside is often very different and in a way in this piece some of the inside is allowed out and of course dark things and really light things, very euphoric and very sad and in a way often we kind of keep, yes, kind of a level outside and we don't have these extremes and in a way in that show it kind of comes through at points, yes, and it's kind of abstracted in a way how it comes up, you'll see, it's kind of hard to talk about it.

*Do you usually work collaboratively or on your own?*

This is really the only solo I have made I usually work collaboratively yes I usually work with quite a few people, big groups.

*And you say you are from Germany.*

Hmm.

*What made you come to England?*

Before I was in England I was in Holland and I was doing a lot of contemporary

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dance and then I was looking for college for study and a teacher in Holland said to me I should have a look at Darlington college in Devon and then I went there, auditioned there and I got in and yes did the course there and I have been here ever since I've kind of built up contacts and friends and yes so I'm in England now, yes.

*And do you generally perform in England or do you go back to Germany as well?*

I've done some stuff back in Germany and done some stuff in France but mainly based in England, yes at the moment we are not like funded so it's a question of that as well, I'd like to show work all over Europe but you have to have the kind of funding and publicity for it yes.

*And do you feel that the English audience perceives your work, devised theatre performance differently from the audience on the continent?*

Well [loud sirens in the background] a lot of the work I do is made in English, I toured with an English show in Germany and obviously often people will not get the nuances of the kind of language, the game of the language that you apply so I think that's a bit problematic but we've done physical stuff so I wouldn't necessarily say or feel like it's perceived so differently, you get longer applause in Germany but that's just a cultural thing [chuckles].

*And what inspired you to get into performance?*

I think it started we techno parties for me I started to dance at techno parties and then realised I was a real extrovert dancer and not so much just into the trance of things but I was kind of keeping eyes open and kind of exploring the body and through that I came into dance and contemporary dance and performance and then theatre, yes.

*And what are your hopes, fears and expectations of going on the plinth?*

I hope I can do it as I want to do it because I'm still talking about it and yes I think it's going to be great, I kind of, I want to not be too stuck with the material and be able to improvise a bit up there so, it feels like I can make it my own up there and yes but yes.

*What do you mean about you hoping, you can do it how you want to do it?*

I just want to be wheeled on and that sorting out if that's possible or not so yes I'll hear after the interview I think.

*Why did you decide you wanted to be wheeled on?*

It's just the whole concept of the show, because usually in the theatre I would be in the space and then the audience comes in and this is different now you would see me come on and that doesn't kind of fit so I'll have to see but basically the concept of the who works on the plinth really only if I'm being wheeled on yes.

*And otherwise it wouldn't work at all?*

Well I don't know, I'll still go on it wouldn't be as good but it would be alright I'll see what will happen.

*What are you hoping to gain from this experience?*

Well, I really liked ... I haven't actually performed in quite a while because I'm directing a lot so it's quite nice for me to push myself to perform and it's an

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opportunity, this piece is actually going to be the basis of a new piece we are starting at the end of this project so in mid-October we are going to start making a new show and this is going to be the base of it but it's going to be a big piece with twelve performers in it and lots of sets so they, this is just part of the new show yes so in a way it's quite nice to come back to this piece and to explore it to perform it and then to see 'ok, I might change to this, it has already changed to this really'.

*And how do you feel about Antony Gormley's decision to democratise art and bring it to the masses, does that relate to you being here today?*

[Pause] I wouldn't say like I want to be here because, I really like his idea, I really like the concept but I would have also, if it would have been a commissioned based project I would have also gone here you know if I would have had to write you know like in a way this is a tombola yes but even if I had to write a proposal I would have written a proposal for it because it's like I'm in the art business so that's what you do so yes no, I like his concept but it's not why I came here.

*Why did you decide to go onto the plinth exactly?*

Because I thought the show would fit so well on it really, yes.

*And what, apart from obviously performance art, total theatre as it were, what are your other interests or passions?*

I love good food, I have to be careful with that [chuckles] I love writing songs, I love poetry and I love making props and yes that's really like I'm very much in the theatre world a lot busy with the theatre with making performance with making props and writing poetry and usually it kind of all fuses in that yes and then I even quite like renovating and stuff like that but I quite enjoy physical stuff hands on building things and so on yes.

*And how do you feel being in England and coming from Germany, how, have you found it quite easy or is it hard?*

No it's quite easy, hmm, I feel very welcome here I don't, there isn't a lot of racism that I experienced at all I think kind of, I'm quite fond of my German accent I'm kind of holding on to it and I'm yes, it's great being here really the weather could be a bit better sometimes but in general it's good.

*And where do you see yourself in sort of ten years time?*

Well I hope to be better funded and to have work and to do some more teaching and yes I really like teaching theatre and making theatre that's what I'm aiming for.

*So you teach as well?*

Yes.

*Where do you teach?*

Part time at University college at Darlington College of Art which is now incorporated into that so yes.

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*So how did you get that job?*

That is through, I was a student there and did my MA there and I mean people liked my work I think and I told them that I'd like to do some workshop and that's how it started off and now I'm now proper teaching proper modules, yes, it kind of developed into that.

*And do you enjoy working there?*

Yes, a lot, it's great, in a way it's a financial leg that is still in theatre and students have great ideas you can steal really, it's very inspiring, you also give and I'm always looking and it's also great, you know, you mean people, I work with some people that I taught before and they are working with me now, yes.

*And how do you feel the recession has affected theatre?*

Well to be honest I'm so in the bottom of all the steps I can't really say, I don't know the last funding application we didn't get but I can't really say it's the fault of the recession I have no idea I can't really I mean ...

*In your immediate circle?*

Well sometimes I think food has gone up but in a way I'm not a house owner, I don't have so much responsibility if I don't have so much money. I don't have so much money it's not ... I don't have a family to kind of pull through I think it's different if you got kids but in a way I don't feel, I hear much more about it than I actually feel it and job wise I do all these bits and bobs jobs and I've always been doing that I haven't now found it's hard to find jobs I have this job now.

*Okay on that note I know you need time to get ready so unfortunately we have to stop.*

Great.

*Okay thank you Klaus.*

**END OF RECORDING**