

One & Other Project

Okay, my name is Tim Jones and I'm conducting this interview on behalf of the Wellcome Trust and the One & Other project in Trafalgar Square London. It's the 30th of September 2009 and the time is 10:20 in the morning. Can you please tell me your name, your age and where you come from?

Yes, my name is Suzanne Harding, I'm 29 years old. I'm from Bedford.

Thank you, when was it you found out first of all about the One & Other project?

Oh a good two months ago I would say, yes.

What was it that inspired you to put your name down?

I love Antony Gormley's work. I think he's pretty amazing and yes, I just saw on the web, I think it was the BBC website, about getting involved and I thought I'd apply.

And how did you feel when you received the email to say you'd been allocated a slot?

I was surprised. I was a bit taken aback because I thought actually do I want to do this now I've been selected, thinking that I never would but yes, I was pretty happy.

What have you decided to do for the duration of the hour?

I'm going to try and highlight some issues around over fishing in the world's seas, especially the blue fin tuna which is incredibly endangered and there are lots of restaurants in London and around the world that are still serving blue fin which I think is highly unethical. So yes, that's the plan, just trying to highlight some issues. I've got two giant tuna fish on sticks with some slogans on so hopefully that would capture, catch some people's attention.

And can you expand a little bit on the theme, also why that's important to you, why you've chosen that?

Yes I'm a bit of an activist. I'm into conservation and I feel it highly important by about 2048 if we don't do something about over fishing now we are not going to have any fish whatsoever to eat so fish will be completely off the menu and yes, the idea is to just raise people's awareness really so they can make ethical choices about the fish that they choose to eat and it's not about stopping fishing altogether because that's obviously not realistic. It's about sustainable fishing.

So how did you get into activism?

It's always been a passion of mine really and I joined Greenpeace a long, long time ago and support many other conservation charities, yes, around the world really just I'm deeply passionate about it. I think it's in my blood to be honest.

One & Other Project

So what other stuff do you get up to with your time?

I'm big Manchester United football fan, a season ticket holder which is probably a bit sadistic really knowing how bad they are most of the time. I love music, I go to a lot of gigs, yes, that's basically how I spent my time socialising with my mates.

What have you been doing? Have you got any stories of things that you've been ... most significant moments?

Most of my most significant moments ... a significant moment was probably in Australia when I went to see Pearl Jam in Sydney, sort of tied in with a holiday and I managed to meet the lead guitarist Mike McCready on Bondi Beach so that was definitely a moment that I will treasure forever. I've also managed to shake hands with the lead singer Eddie Vedder at a gig in Croatia so I've sort of been around the world to see them really... and loved them. Some people they think it's a bit sad but, no, I absolutely adore them all so, yes.

And what stories have you got from travelling around? You've been to Croatia, you've been to Australia.

Yes.

Where else have you been?

I've been lots of places, I've been to Hong Kong and just travelled quite a lot really not just for music but a lot of travelling as well. So yes, I've been to lots of places, there are many stories ... no I don't think I can go into too much detail.

So a little bit of background about you then, what is it you do for a living?

I'm actually a civil servant. I work for the [?] agency as a recruitment manager so I'm in HR basically. Yes I enjoy it, it's not exactly where I saw myself going. I always thought I would go the conservation route but not that easy to get into and certainly not that well paid. So yes, that's what I do, yes, quite simple.

And what other stuff do you kind of like got up to, have you got any stories about past jobs or, or, plans or dreams what you would ideally like?

Ideally I would like to be working for Greenpeace or one of the big conservation charities helping all the causes that they stand for basically. So yes, I definitely would love to do that at some point and I'm just about to embark on a three-year post graduate degree in HR so I'm not sure that's the right way to go really when I want to go into conservation but yes, that would definitely where I would want to go.

So what's that like then just to be about to embark on a post grad how are you feeling at the moment?

One & Other Project

I feel very nervous about it because three years is a very long time in my eyes, it's probably not that long really but, yes, it's quite daunting at the age of well nearly thirty taking on another you know three years degree but yes, it would be worth it in the end I'm sure and skills are transferable and it will take me hopefully to other countries as well to work. The plan was to go to Australia and live there so hopefully one day I'll be able to do that and with the degree it will certainly help.

Why Australia?

I just feel in love with the place when I first went really and have been back several times and keep wanting to go back but don't have the work visa so I always come home again which is a bit of a nightmare. But yes, I just love the place, I think it's great and also they are so conscious of their environment and, you know, they are actually ... it's ingrained into them from a very, very young age to look after the planet basically and the world they live in which is fantastic. It's completely different here. I feel that here we don't care if we litter the streets. I mean London is a pretty filthy city as are most cities and towns in this country, unfortunately, so I think we need a bit of that over here I must admit.

And how about, have you studied before?

No I haven't done a degree because I've been working in this, in HR, for so long. It doesn't actually mean that I need one; I just go and do a post grad and a Masters.

Cool, so what would you say are the most important things to you at the moment in your life? Maybe you've mentioned some of them already.

Yes, I definitely have mentioned them. I think the most important things to me are my family, conservation. I tend to prefer animals to people; they seem to do less damage so yes they are definitely the two most important things to me.

And, for the record, a little bit of insight into your family background and friendship groups? Who do you like spending time with?

Oh, I have a very small group of friends that ... we are all very close, rather than a large group that I'm not really that chummy with. I'm very much a few friends sort of person and yes just love them all and...

And what do you like to do when you get together?

Oh the odd glass of vino it's always in order ... yes just enjoy socialising with them really, we ... my local town, Bedford isn't particularly great for going out in so we generally go around each other's houses and have girly nights so that's really nice.

Cool so what plans, hopes, fears do you have for the future?

One & Other Project

Oh gosh, that's a question ... plans are to do my degree, go to Australia perhaps then look at getting a job in conservation over there and yes I don't like looking too far into the future. It's quite a scary prospect so I'd like to keep things in the now, that's it really.

And now going back to the project, how is it to be one of 2400 people that get to get on the plinth?

It's very exciting, I think, especially for the cause. I think it really will help publicise the issues that I'm highlighting so yes I'm really pleased.

What are your thoughts, comments on... the artistic, the artistic concept of ...

Yes, I think it's really interesting. I think it's a fantastic way ... and obviously something that's never been done before. I think it's really interesting looking at all the different types of people that go up there and actually what they want to do and whether it'll be just sit there like the guy at the moment with his Newcastle shirt on I just think it's great whether ... it doesn't matter what you do I think ... yes, even if you sit there and it's pretty good. People are different and everybody does their own little things so yes, really good.

And what are your comments and thoughts on the place, the space, Trafalgar Square?

Yes it's amazing, you couldn't get a better spot really for it to be honest, it's an iconic landmark in London so I think it's amazing, yes, definitely something to tell the grandchildren.

So how are you feeling half an hour before you go up onto the plinth?

Yes good, quite excited ... yes, excited, a bit nervous but I think it would be great, my parents would be there ... should be, should be good so yes, excited.

What are your plans for the rest of the day?

Oh, perhaps I'll have a wander around London and maybe do some shopping, trying to fit some of that in, yes, that's it.

Great.

And then go home.

Is there anything else you'd like to say?

I think that's about it to be honest yes.

Great, thank you very much.



One & Other Project

Thank you.