

# TOM GREDER / OSKAR

2011

Theatre, street & circus performer  
'Play', performance & creativity workshops  
Corporate performance & workshops

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Photo: C. Raguzzi



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## A: PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

### Performance Introduction

From full-length theatre to cabaret sketches, circus turns and street performances, Tom Greder, alias Oskar, captivates his audience leading them to a world where life and comedy become one. Developed over 23 years as a solo act, in circus and theatre companies or in the multi award winning clown duo "Oskar & Strudel", his unique interactive comedy style and range of physical skills and characters allow him to adapt to any audience, anywhere.

As a solo performer or working together with others, Tom Greder writes for, contributes to and performs for contemporary circus, theatre and street productions, festivals, films, corporate events, workshops, team-building and promotional projects throughout the world.

Since 1988, he has produced and toured five full-length productions and numerous circus and cabaret routines internationally, as well as conducting creativity, physical theatre and contemporary clowning workshops throughout the world.

He performs in English, French, German, Swiss-German, Spanish and non-language specific.

## Performance Routines

### “ALL ABOARD !”



***“Utterly hilarious, sweet and never failing to impress, Greder’s show is as close to perfect as I have seen in quite some time”***

*Australian Stage, Australia 2007*

An interactive parable turning reality into fantasy and blurring the boundaries between observer and performer.

Transporting the public from passive viewer into dynamic accomplice, Oskar presents a voyage into the great unknown. Follow a toy locomotive as it travels through sublime worlds created on stage and finally journeys its way through the whole audience.

This skilled and delightfully profound parody of the human condition explores the whole wide circle of life and death, wisdom and ignorance, laughter and tears.

***“All Aboard can not be described well enough to capture its genius. It is simply a play that must be seen to be believed”***

*Arts Hub, Australia 2007*

Best suited for theatre, street or cabaret

Duration: 80 minute theatre production, 20 to 45 minute street/cabaret

Languages: Non-language specific

### “A DAY AT THE THEATRE”



A totally interactive show redefining the notion of theatre. The audience is guided through a series of their own routines which are then orchestrated as a finale. A show that turns reality into fantasy and blows apart the wall between performer and observer.

***“A poignant and hilarious parody of the human condition”*** *La Liberal*

*de L’est, France*

Best suited for stage, cabaret or circus

Duration: 15 to 40 minutes

Languages: English, French, German, Swiss-German, Spanish

### “STREET”



A multi-skilled, interactive and highly refined street comedy show where great skills are just an excuse to get to the comic heart of the matter. A classically styled, uniquely interpreted circle show combining juggling, improvisation, live music and audience interaction.

***“His manipulation of the diabolo was breathtaking & his juggling to a jazz piece inspired”*** *Theatre Australiasia*

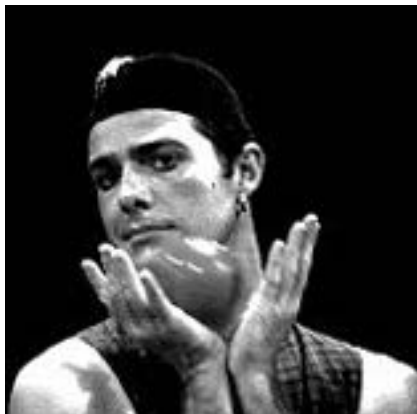
Best suited for street or festival performances

Duration: 20 to 45 minutes

Languages: English, French, German, Swiss-German, Spanish, silent

## Performance Routines *continued*

### "ADAM HAD'EM"



A highly skilled, profound and humorous comment on the human condition, set where it all began, in the garden of Eden. Adam's struggle with temptation, will against counter-will, despair and joy are brought to life...and a fascination with an apple becomes a one ball contact juggling routine of the highest quality.

*"Physical control and poignant comedy"* Theatre Australasia

Best suited for cabaret, circus or stage  
Duration: 30 minutes, 45 minutes or full length theatre production  
Languages: English, French, German, Swiss-German, silent

### "A NIGHT AT THE CABARET"



Classic sketches developed over 17 years working in circus and on the cabaret circuits of Australia, Asia and Europe.

From high skills artistic or interactive comedy to poetic clown pieces, Oskar presents a range of routines suitable for any venue, anywhere.

*"Mesmerising"* Modern Movement, Australia

Best suited for cabaret, variety, circus or stage  
Duration: 5 to 60 minutes  
Languages: English, French, German, Swiss-German, silent

### "OSKAR & STRUDEL"



The dexterity and sublime comedy of Oskar meets the musical virtuosity and irresistible charm of Strudel. Together, they entice their audience to a delightful and profound world rich with physical skills, live music, improvisation and humour laced with the paradoxes of the human condition. Developed over 15 years in 21 countries & in five languages, this prize winning comedy show has it all.

*"Deeply Funny"* Time Off, Australia

Best suited for cabaret, circus, stage or corporate  
Duration: 5 to 60 minutes  
Languages: English, French, German, Swiss-German, silent

## Performance Awards

- **1<sup>st</sup> Peoples Choice Prize: Gent Festival, Belgium**
- **1<sup>st</sup> Peoples Choice Prize (three times winner): Feldkirch Gaukler Festival, Austria.**
- **1<sup>st</sup> Prize & Peoples Choice Prize: Vevey Festival des Artists de Rue, Switzerland**
- **1<sup>st</sup> Prize: Swiss Casino Comedy Awards Locarno, Switzerland**
- **1<sup>st</sup> Prize & Judges Commendation: Sierre Street Theatre Festival, Switzerland.**
- **1<sup>st</sup> Prize: Brisbane Biennial Festival, Australia**

## Press Quotes

**"Utterly hilarious, sweet and never failing to impress, Greder's show is as close to perfect as I've seen in quite some time"** *Australian Stage, 2007*

**"All Aboard can not be described well enough to capture its genius. It is simply a play that must be seen to be believed"** *Arts Hub, Australia 2007*

**"Impeccable comic timing"** *Rave Magazine, Australia 2007*

**"Deeply Funny"** *Time Off, Australia*

**"Mesmerising"** *Modern Movement, Australia*

**"Physical control and poignant comedy"** *Theatre Australasia*

**"Brave, toughing and thoroughly amusing"** *Scene Magazine, Australia*

**"A poignant and hilarious parody of the human condition"** *La Liberal de L'est, France*

**"Sublimely comic. Strong images of a world beyond the merely visual"** *South China Morning Post, Hong Kong*

**"His manipulation of the diablo was breathtaking & his juggling to a jazz piece inspired"** *Theatre Australasia*

**"All Aboard is one of the deepest and lightest street acts of the times...genius"** *Flor, Holland*

**"Oskars night train mixes illusions, dreams and reality together"** *Achterhoeks Weekblad, Holland*

## Tom Greder Formation

2010	Stephen Motram: "The Logic of Movement", England
1998	Stephan Teuwissen, 'Slapstick', Switzerland
1997	Justus Neuman, four week private clown tuition, Australia
1995	Alex Pinder, 'The Clown and Mask', Australia Rock 'n' Roll Circus, Acrobalance, Australia Russel Dykstra, 'Movement for Actors', Australia Anna Yen, 'Movement', Australia
1994	Angela De Castro, 'The Clown', Australia Daniel Stein, 'Movement for Actors and Corporeal Mimes', Hong Kong Tang Shu Wing, 'The Clown', Hong Kong
1993	Philippe Gaulier, 'The Clown', Ecole Philippe Gaulier, London Sean Gandini, 'Juggling and Movement', London The Circus Space, Four month circus skills intensive, London Company Philippe Genty, 'Movement and Complicity', London
1988	Bachelor of Human Movement Studies (Ed.), Uni. of Queensland, Australia

## Performance Companies

- **"Oskar & Strudel"**: Internationally acclaimed, multi-award winning comedy duo.
- **"Tony's Imaginary Circus"**, Australia: founding member, co-writer, co-director, performer.
- **"The Tiny Top"**: Cabaret tent. Performances of "All Aboard" for the Adelaide Fringe Festival, Edinburgh Fringe Festival, the Tasmanian Circus Festival and the Australian National Circus Festival.
- **"The Miscellaneous Gentlemen's Marching Band"**, Australia: Roving clown band.
- **"Tasdance Contemporary Dance Company"**: 'TEASE' production.
- **"Queensland Performing Arts Trust"**, Australia 'Dragon Dreams' production: Actor and musician.
- **"Queensland Theatre Company"**, Australia: Support actor in 'Peter Pan' production.
- **"Theatre Resolu"**, Hong Kong: Support actor in 'Days of the Commune' by Bertold Brecht.

## Performance History *Highlights of booked work include:*

### AUSTRALIA



Metro Arts Theatre, Brisbane  
Australian National Circus Festival  
Tasmanian Circus Festival  
Western Australian Circus Festival  
Ten Days on the Island, Tasmania  
Adelaide Fringe Festival  
Melbourne and Brisbane Fringe Festivals  
Brisbane Biennial Festival  
Out of the Box Festival  
Woodford Folk Festival  
Port Fairy Folk Festival  
Fremantle Buskers Festival  
Peoples Day Festival, Brisbane

### AUSTRIA

Linz Street Theatre Festival  
Feldkirch Gaukler Festival  
Villach Festival  
Salzburg Festival

### BELGIUM

Namur en Mai  
Gent Festival ( Peoples Choice 1<sup>st</sup> prize)  
Chassepierre Festival  
Fete De Fleur  
Fete Romanes, Brussels  
Rue du Bocage Herve  
Zommer Festival  
Z'Arts Up Festival  
Espaces Speculoos Brussels

### CROATIA

Festival of New Circus

### CZECH REPUBLIC

International Theatre Festival Brno

### FINLAND

Jyväskylä Arts Festival  
Tampere International Theatre Festival

### FRANCE

Theatre D'Arles  
Theatre Clermont l'Hérault  
Festival Performance D'Acteur, Cannes  
Grenoble Festival de Theatre European  
Fest Arts Festival International des Arts de la Rue, Libourne  
Saperlipopette, voilà Enfantillages, Montpellier  
Festival Rues et Cies Epinal  
La Marelle, Maizieres les Metz  
Lez'Arts Festival Marcoles  
Nezenbulles

### GERMANY

Kleines Fest im Grossen Garten  
La Strada Bremen  
Welttheatre der Strasse, Schwerte  
La Strada Hamburg  
Koblenz Gaukler Festival

### HOLLAND



Mooi Wer Spelen, Delft  
Oerol Festival Terschelling  
Boulevard Theatre Festival  
Rotterdam Street Theatre Festival  
Overijssel Op Straat  
Karavaan Festival  
Artimond Festival  
Lowlands Festival  
Breda Festival  
Straatfestival uit Vlissingen  
Amersfoorts Theatre Terras  
Reuringsfestival Purmerend  
Festpiet Udenhout

<b>HONG KONG</b>	Hong Kong Fringe Festival Hong Kong International Arts Festival
<b>IRELAND</b>	Dublin Diversions Festival
<b>ITALY</b>	Pennabilli Artisti In Piazza Anderson Festival, Sestri Levante Montegrano Festival
<b>JAPAN</b>	Iida Puppetry Festival
<b>JORDAN</b>	Amman International Theatre Festival
<b>KOREA</b>	Chuncheon Puppetry festival Suon Fortress Festival
<b>LUXEMBURG</b>	Esch International Theatre Festival
<b>NEW ZEALAND</b>	World Buskers Festival, Christchurch
<b>NORWAY</b>	Porsgrunn International Theatre Festival Vinterfestuke, Narvik
<b>POLAND</b>	Buskerbus Festival International Theatre Festival, Katowice Tall Ships, Szczecin Miedzynarodowy Theatre Festival, Szczecin
<b>PORTUGAL</b>	Lisbon International Comedy Festival Festival O Gesto Orheludo, Agueda Internacional Teatro Comico Festival, Maia Frestas Festival, Porto Festival Internacional de Teatro ACERT
<b>ROMANIA</b>	Sibiu International Theatre Festival
<b>SLOVENIA</b>	Festival Ana Desetnica, Lubljana Festival Lent, Maribor
<b>SPAIN</b>	Festival International Clownbaret, Tenerife, Canary Islands Internacional de Teatre de Teresetes de Mallorca Fira Titelles Lleida Titirimundi Festival, Segovia XXVII Feria Internacional del Títere de Sevilla Festiclown Santiago De Compostella Escena Poblenou Festival de Tardor, Barcelona Festival Internacional De Clown, Sala El Montacargas, Madrid Fira Tarrega Festival La Merce Festival Barcelona Bilbao Aste Nagusia
<b>SWEDEN</b>	Stockholm Water Festival Malmo Festival
<b>SWITZERLAND</b>	Buskers Bern Vevey Festival des Artistes de Rue (Peoples choice 1 <sup>st</sup> prize) Swiss Comedy Awards Locarno (1 <sup>st</sup> Prize winner) Sierre Grand Prix de Spektacle de Rue (1 <sup>st</sup> prize winner) Montreux Comedy Festival Montreux Jazz Festival Zurich Theatre Spektakel Neuchatel Buskers Festival La Plage des Six Pompes Festival Lausanne Festival de la Cite Fete du Peuple Jurassien, Delemont
	
<b>ENGLAND &amp; UK</b>	Swindon Brunel Festival Edinburgh Fringe Festival Manchester Commonwealth games festival Glastonbury Festival Cardiff Festival Jersey Festival of the Arts

## B: WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

### Workshop Introduction



With over 24 years experience as performing artist, teacher and dramaturg, Tom Greder conducts regular creativity, performing, communication and team-building workshops throughout the world.

Based on 'Play' as being the fundamental expression of human creativity and the basis of meaningful interaction, communication and problem solving, the workshops promote an articulate, profound, personally relevant and transformative expression for all those who want or need it.

Toms' unique approach focuses on the relationship between the 'Person', 'Character' and 'Artist' in all of us. By exploring, understanding and harmonising the often conflicting nature of these 'inner voices', participants gain a clearer awareness of themselves and their creative process. In application, this knowledge encourages a more engaging, honest and relaxed communication and performance style.

The inspiring and challenging workshops are aimed at anyone who wishes to gain a deeper insight into their creativity, motivations & latent abilities, and develop clarity of expression and an empowered and liberated stage presence.

## Workshop Pedagogy

In order to create articulate and engaging communication or poignant performance, a deeper level of understanding about the human condition has to be awakened. Essential to this is a personal acceptance of the absurd and paradoxical nature of existence. The creative and artistic process is a deeply *human* one. It draws on the *human* and speaks through metaphor, parody, analogy, satire and comedy about the *human*.

Towards this understanding and acceptance, the workshops look at isolating, understanding and utilising the often conflicting relationship between the **Artist**, **Person** and **Character** (*Personage*) within us all. Related to the concepts of Ego, Super-ego and Id, this notion helps participants to identify the different objectives and motivations of these inner voices. Essentially, these voices represent our opposing and irreconcilable desire for both control & chaos, security & risk, predictability & surprise, wisdom & ignorance....the paradoxical human experience.

However, just as each of these **Voices** is integral in the creative process, so too can each interfere with or sabotage the process. Each has its place and significance yet each tries to dominate. It is the *Artist* who must delegate the responsibilities of each *voice*....and learn to manage the two effectively.

By doing so, the performer is able to identify with and articulate a total personality, and thus, transcend mere entertainment.

This is achieved by unlocking the habitual, rigid **Form** of the participant through creating an environment of **Play**. In this state, the often denied and filtered **impulses** of the *Person* have the chance to manifest. *Play* encourages the freedom of movement, speech and fantasy necessary to the illogical, impulsive experience of creativity and essential to good performance.

Free from normal inhibitions and the constraints of habit and denial, these *personal impulses* are given a form through the *Character* (the stage *personage*). Expressing this total personality through dramaturgy and performance creates a transformative experience....one which not only engages, but also affects and changes both the audience and the performer.

Although primarily targeted at performing artists, the principles and techniques explored and developed can be applied to any creative endeavor, professional or personal. As such, the workshops cater for a vast range of participants, all of whom share in common an interest or need for creative, personally relevant and profound communication which transcends words and actions.

## Workshop Content

The form of the workshop is based on contemporary Play and clown techniques. Contemporary clowning principles are utilised heavily because the clown figure, in its pure form, bases itself precisely on the 'human condition'....on the fundamental paradox that is life and death. In this way it engages and develops both the personal and professional aspects of a participant.

The workshop uses individual, partner and group games and tasks to expand the creative palate of participants and clarify their individual personal and professional paths. The activities focus on combining personal exploration and revelation with techniques for applying these in an abstracted or metaphorical way to the creation of engaging performance.

In addition to theoretical, philosophical and historical discussion on the nature and creation of comedy and performance, the games, exercise and tasks aim to:

- Confront and challenge the blocks and habits which stand in the personal and creative way;
- Expand the creative palate and techniques available to participants;
- Explore techniques which give physical and verbal form to creativity;
- Expand a knowledge and vocabulary of the creative process;
- Encourage the inclusion of other people in the creative process;
- Discover and explore techniques for freeing up movement, speech & fantasy;
- Demonstrate new-found abilities and techniques in solo, duo and group improvisations and routines;
- Demystify the stage experience;
- Empower the performer.

## Key Vocabulary

Providing participants with a vocabulary through which to understand their work and continue their exploration is essential. This includes:

- **Person, Character, Artist:** The inner voices which contribute or inhibit the creative process. Where the *Person* represents a desire for control, safety and predictability, the *Character* represents the desire for chaos, risk and surprise. These two diametrically opposed “inner directives” must be overseen by the *Artist* if the resulting expression is to be both profound and transformative. It is the *Person* which provides the human and thus, significant, impulses...and yet it is the *Person* who fears to release these. It is the *Character* that abstracts and “plays’ with these to give them a form....and yet it is the *Character* who lacks the restraint to keep focus. It is the *Artist* which must control the relative input of both voices.
- **Breaking form:** Liberating creativity from the confines of habitual patterns of movement, speech and thought. By remystifying the world around us and within us, the performer is able to draw on and comment on the complete human experience. This involves the elimination of ‘filters’ that normally guide our actions and restrict our reactions. What results is a ‘Curious’ and active mind with a broader scope for possibilities and the means through which to express them.
- **Conflict:** wherever there is conflict, so too is humor. The human condition is an absurd paradox, and this dichotomy forms the basis of all comedy.
- **Failure:** As an essential part of the human condition, failure must be embraced. By doing so, performers are able to explore and comment on the full range of the human condition.
- **Impulse:** Impulse forms the basis of natural, meaningful and insightful material and language.
- **Resonance & The Pause:** Allowing time for the effect of action & language to impact on the performer and the audience. It is the pause which reveals the truth of the matter. For this reason, it is often denied by the ‘Person’.
- **Abstraction:** Using exaggeration, reduction or distention to highlight the intention or point of action & text.
- **Detail / Distillation / Crystallisation:** Clarity of intention & expression through the elimination of superfluous actions or text.
- **Here and Now:** In order to be sensitive, quick and insightful, each moment in time and space must be accepted. In order to achieve this ‘head space’, the performer must be able to eliminate the past and the future and focus on the heart of the matter as it is here and now. In this way, the participants learn how to ‘command the space’.
- **The rule of three:** The creation of a rhythm is essential in order to create surprise through breaking this rhythm. The repetition of an action or thought projects possible outcomes into the future. By breaking this pattern and offering alternative “surprise” conclusions, comedy is created. The audience must be seduced into believing they know the outcome and then be surprised by the alternative.

# Workshop Teaching History

## **Europe:**

Stockholm Academy of Dramatic Arts, Masters course, Sweden  
Nouveau Clown Institute (NCI), Barcelona, Spain  
Budapest University of Theatre and Film, Hungary  
Flemish Centre of Circus Arts, Antwerp, Belgium  
Performance d'Acteur Festival, Cannes, France  
Festival of New Circus, Zagreb, Croatia  
Comicodeon Festival, Kapfenberg, Austria  
CIPA (Centre for the Investigation & Pedagogy of Acting), El Espinar, Spain  
Jyväskylä Arts Festival, Finland  
Tampere International Theatre Festival, Finland  
Valencian Circus Association (L'Espai de Circ ) Valencia, Spain  
Festiclown Masterclass, Santiago De Compostella, Spain  
International Clown & Comedy Series, Bern, Switzerland  
Festival International Clownbaret, Tenerife, Canary Islands  
New Orleans Fringe Festival, USA  
"Work in Progress Arts Meeting", Srebrna Gora, Poland  
International Puppetry Festival of Mallorca, Spain  
Studio Teatralne Theatre School, Warsaw, Poland  
Coimbra Clown & Creativity Workshop, Portugal  
Gdansk Clown Workshop Teatr ZNAK, Poland  
Merida, Spain  
Vienna, Austria  
Graz, Austria  
Segovia, Spain  
Wales, Cardiff  
North Wales, Bangor, Wales

## **Australia:**

Fremantle, Western Australia  
National Circus Festival  
Tasmanian Circus Festival  
Margaret River Circus Festival  
Woodford Folk Festival  
Brisbane Finding Comedy Workshops  
Sydney Clowning Workshop  
Melbourne Clown Workshop  
Hobart Clowning Workshop  
Northern New South Wales Play and Creativity workshop  
Ulverstone Clowning & Creativity Workshop  
WOW Wolongong Womens Circus  
Adelaide Fringe Festival

## **School & Youth Workshops:**

La Marelle Festival, France  
Samford Valley Steiner School, Australia  
King George 5th School, Hong Kong  
Sommerville House Girls School, Brisbane, Australia  
Brisbane Girls Grammar School, Australia  
Bardon, Nambour High and Upper Brookfield State Schools, Australia  
Out of the Box youth festival, Brisbane, Australia  
Hands On Arts Inc., Australia. Regional schools workshop tour  
Metro Arts, Brisbane Australia. Primary school holiday program  
Spaghetti Youth Circus & Warehouse Youth Circus, Australia  
Slipstream Youth Circus, Hobart, Australia  
Sir Lesley Wilson Youth Detention Centre, Brisbane, Australia  
Queensland Theatre Company, Brisbane, Australia 'Theatre Experience Week'

# Performance Workshop Reference 1

**From:**  
**Lilly Blue**  
**New York City 2001**

I have spent my life suspecting that there is something hidden just beneath the surface of our interactions. Something behind the selves we desperately endeavour to be in order to satisfy misunderstood expectations, and misplaced dreams.

At some point in my life that suspicion became so overpowering that everything I did seemed touched with a sense of both mystery and investigation. So often we think that searching is about finding things, discovering paths and partnerships, and reaping the abundant rewards of our endeavour. Yet there is a different kind of searching as well. There are the uncoverings that help us to lose things, that support tiny ego deaths, and unravel our contorted costuming so that we can undress. The gifts of loss. The beauty of vulnerability. The pleasure of egoless complicity. The bliss of unreasonable joy. The strength that comes from solitude. The power of simplicity. The value of fear and of taking risks. The comedy of humanbeingness.

These are just some of the discoveries I encountered in a week of working intensely with Tom Greder in his Master Clown workshop.

Clown work is incomparable with any other performance training because it pretends to be easy, and yet for me it is the most challenging and fulfilling work I have ever done. Tom has the sensitivity and insight to create a safe enough environment for his students to take risks, venture into unknown territory, and discover the pleasure of "not knowing". This may seem simple enough, but as performers we have such heavy bags of tricks and ornate masks that we rely on, that it can be a terrifying and exhilarating journey to let go, and uncover the power and beauty of our own ordinariness.

My experience of working with Tom was nothing less than transformative. I am cautious of diluting the experience by using grand language, but the reality is that my work with Tom was intrinsically related to the life changing choices I made after that week. The experience of standing unveiled in front of an audience and inspiring joy and laughter gave me a deeper belief in the place of truth and play in my work.

He helped me to unravel innocence and interest from the chaos that had overtaken my creativity. I remember spending months after the workshop feeling as if I had been born to a new planet. I became intrigued by everything. I wanted to experience life directly and I was no longer prepared to compromise for the sake of acceptance or applause. My sense of play deepened and I became committed to making courageous choices as a performer even if it meant failure. And my relationship to failure changed. In fact failing became such a hilarious and enriching experience that, as a clown, it no longer really existed.

Today I am living, performing, and teaching in New York. I continue to believe that everything is possible and every time I experience that delicious feeling of happiness for no particular reason I think of Tom and smile.

Lilly Blue

## Performance Workshop Reference 2

**From:**  
**Laurie McLeod**  
**Brisbane 2001**

Dear Tom,

Please treat this as my personal recommendation for your workshops. There are many aspects of your workshops which I would like to recommend and which has my greatest priority is difficult to decide but I have to start somewhere and really what I respected most was the safe environment you created right from the outset. You also managed somehow to keep this safe and creative space open for the entire workshop period, I was amazed. I have attended many workshops in various areas of theatre: Mask, movement and acting training so I am not a new comer to theatre however, my own participation in the workshop can vary tremendously depending not on the subject but on the quality of the teaching.

I think there are two aspects to teaching. That knowledge is passed on and that a safe environment is created so that participants can feel within their boundaries and still feel free to express themselves to the greatest extent of their creativity. I have no idea how you did this but you certainly managed both - a rare occurrence as far as I am concerned.

Perhaps the benevolence of the naive clown and his world and the energy level needed to operate within this world create an atmosphere very conducive to creative expression. More power to the clown if you ask me. Still I think it was your devotion to the workshop process your confidence and experience with that process which caused them to run so smoothly. I was after all a complete beginner when it came to clowning but felt confident to participate fully in all your workshop activities and since have developed projects of my own in clowning (including an application to the Australia Council) feeling confident to carry them out and your workshops only finished a few weeks ago.

While I say you created a safe environment I would hate anyone to think you were soft on us. I don't remember ever being so challenged in my life and the confidence gained by being so challenged has turned my professional life around as well as my personal life. Congratulations.

The result of all this I think great art and good entertainment. Tom your workshop not only gave us skills to be entertaining but also a deeper understanding of the human condition and where clowns live within the realm of commenting on what we humans experience. I feel just that step closer to achieving the goal I mentioned on day 1 of your workshop:- paradise to me meant being more light hearted. So while the workshops dealt with the practicalities of clowning they also had sufficient intellectual content and quality to be whole in their training.

Anyway I can only wish and hope the best for you and your wonderful workshops and hope that more performers can experience them. Thank you and I hope you can have this positive influence on performers where ever you travel in the world and where ever you teach for you are a true teacher.

Yours sincerely

Laurie

## Additional Workshop References

### **Jango Edwards** **Clown and teacher**

During my 40 years as an artist and instructor of professional clowning I discovered in the world of the new clown tribe the essential need for masters of the art. Tom Greder is one of them and an equal to the others I've found. His classes are an important part of the information new students must obtain to develop their own vision of the clown as an artist on stage or off. He is a permanent member on the teaching staff of the "Clown Theory Master Class" held each year at "The Performance of Actors Festival" in Cannes, France and I recommend him to both new students and professionals".

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### **Sarah Fotheringham** **Cardiff 2000**

To whom it may concern,

I would like to introduce you to an artist and who recently came to my attention. I discovered him by accident twelve months ago when a friend twisted my arm and encouraged me to participate on his first weeklong workshop in Britain held in North Wales.

Tom Greder is a performer and teacher working with a potent mixture of intuition, skill and perception rooted in experience exploring the world of the clown. His biography lists his considerable performance and personal training however this will not tell you of his abilities as teacher and guide. Having participated on a number of workshops I feel that Tom Greder's method and style in teasing out, revealing and supporting the shyest to the most competent of 'clowns' in all of us deserves a wider audience. He is a teacher who enthuses the uninitiated with passion and challenges with humility. You will not feel short changed from this week of many changes!

*Since Tom's workshop I have trained with Didier Danthios and Angela de Castro in London and Jonathan Kay in Scotland. I rate Tom Greder's work up with the best of them.*

If there is anything else I can answer for you about the work of Tom Greder, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Sarah Fotheringham

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### **Lauren Flannery** **Theatre director** **Hobart 2005**

The workshops really opened up a new understanding of performance, something I think was already there but suddenly became clear.

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### **Wayne van Wijk** **Clown Doctor**

Tom gives great insight into the nature of the clown. His training reminds me to slow down, keep it simple, and most importantly, build an honest relationship with the audience. In addition to this I have been armed with several "tricks" to throw myself out of the controlled mindset of the performer and into the chaotic and wonderful mystery of the clown.

# School Workshop References

**From:**  
**Meg Arvier**  
**Flipstream Youth Circus**  
**Tasmania 2004**

I had seen Tom perform on a number of occasions over the past few years at various festivals and in street performance and I have always thought that he was brilliant – A very serious clown!!!

I have been involved in a youth circus for 4 years as a trainer, and this year (2004) when I found out that Tom Greder would be in Hobart for some clowning workshops, I filled my car with some of our young participants and drove them down there for a very seriously funny weekend.

The workshop catered well for the wide variety of age groups enrolled, and it was jam-packed with surprises and thrills. Very quickly all inhibitions fell, and the group seemed united in joy, laughter and some tears – but above all, we were all focused on the serious business of developing our own individual clowns. What amazed me the most was Tom's ability to quickly gain the trust and attention of all the young performers – some of these young people can be very suspicious of adult driven activities. I still don't know exactly how he managed this, but he seemed to handle gently the quiet sensitive issues that evolved, yet he was tough with the boundaries that he wished to maintain. At all times he was respectful of us all, and he seemed to delight in all our human differences and foibles. He even managed to encourage me to sing alone to the group – absolutely no-one ever hears me sing "publicly" – not pretty!!!!

For me, time spent with Tom was more a journey than simply a workshop. During our 4 hour journey home there was plenty of time to reflect on what had happened and amidst some of the excited chatter were the following comments.....

Jesse (12 years) – "I like hot donuts and I like talking – so eating and talking – that was cool!"

Andrew (12 years) – "I liked the way Tom was really friendly to us all. I like acting, but this was the best clowning workshop that I have ever been to"

Hayden (13 years) – "It was all great. Listening into the radio ear-phones and trying to copy what was said was so funny – I wasn't nervous at all"

Chris (14 years) – "The whole workshop was fun, but doing the market commentary was a buzz – I just couldn't stop and the words just kept coming out of me. I liked the faces Tom could make, and I felt that he really thought that we were important to him"

Meredith (16 years) – "Tom was great. It was really interesting to learn about the funny things that happen naturally – it was a relief to know that you don't have to really try and be funny".

Cheers  
Meg Arvier

## C: CORPORATE WORK OVERVIEW

### Corporate Performances & Animation Introduction

With an emphasis on interactive performance and working closely with organizers and presenters, Tom Greder designs, directs, contributes to and performs for presentations, orientation programs, team building sessions and corporate events throughout the world.

*“He literally bewitched and transformed tired or preoccupied faces into smiling, relaxed and attentive ones”. Reference, Swiss Expo ‘02*

His vast performing and teaching experience, range of skills, characters and performance style allow him to adapt to the nature and needs of each corporate event and contribute to the realization of its objectives.

He specializes in working closely with program designers and presenters to:

- **Design programs which maximize the objectives of corporate events;**
- **Develop a multi-disciplinary and conceptual approach to events;**
- **Assist & work with speakers to maximize the effectiveness of their presentations;**
- **Increase the active engagement of participants through interactive performance;**
- **Maximise the short and long-term effectiveness of events;**
- **Utilise theatrical and comedy performance for effective outcomes.**

### Corporate Workshops Introduction

For many companies in these changing times, the individual within the group is taking on an ever-growing responsibility and significance. This is especially true of companies whose product is creative in nature, who operate at the cutting edge of market trends and whose employees deal face to face with clients.

The challenge is how best to encourage and utilise the creativity of these individuals without losing corporate integrity...to create a team, the members of which have the freedom and abilities to explore their own inspiration, whilst maintaining the attitude & skills needed to exchange and work with the objectives, interests and abilities of others. At the core of effective communication is how information is received, not simply how it is transmitted.

The objective of the workshops is to discover, explore and develop individual and group techniques for maximising creativity and communication within the given parameters of a company methodology. The approach bases itself on the exploration of ‘play’ as the being the fundamental expression of human discovery, creativity and the basis of meaningful communication and group dynamics.

The workshops explore and promote an empowered, liberated and sensitive “stage presence” for all those who want or need it. Participants can expect to gain a deeper practical and theoretical understanding of their creative processes and develop a more articulate, meaningful and relevant form of personal and creative expression in their work. Furthermore, the sessions encourage participants not only to promote their own creative abilities, but also to interact with and contribute to those of others.

All workshops are tailored to the special requirements of both companies and participants.

# Corporate Performances & Animation History

- **Michael Page International (Page Personnel), Switzerland.** Co-writer and fascilitaor for "Page Personel Management Training Program".
- **Swiss Expo.02:** 12 day orientation program animation for 3000 employees in cooperation with Adecco / Manpower.
- **Triaspect, Switzerland:** Ongoing corporate animation and team building for this human resource and project solutions, organization and development company.
- **Baxter, Switzerland:** team building seminar
- **Adecco Human Resources, Switzerland:** Animation for orientation day for new employees.
- **Nedap Industries, Holland:** Open day event performances.
- **Swiss Logistics Awards 2004:** Award event performance.
- **Cambridge Technologies, Holland:** Team building and creativity workshop for new employees of this multi-national graphics and web design company.
- **Fun Academy:** Founding member and current principle creativity and communication teacher for this project management skills company.
- **WEGA Tagungszentrum des Wirtschaftsforum, Weinfelden, Switzerland:** Animator for "Thurgauer Lehrlingstag" 2004, 2003.
- **International Press Convention, Brugges, Belgium:** Animator and performer.
- **Siemens Ag, Austria:** Animator and performer for staff event.
- **Pick n Pay, Switzerland:** Animator and performer for staff event.

## Swiss Expo.02 Corporate Reference

**From: Expo.02 Job Center**  
[www.expojobcenter.ch](http://www.expojobcenter.ch)

**Thomas Greder, alias Oskar, was engaged as the master of ceremonies for the "Orientation & Formation Day" for the Swiss Expo.02 personnel.**

The "Expo.02 Job Centre" was the official information and recruitment provider for the 2002 National Swiss Exposition. It was specifically established for this occasion as a consortium between Adecco and Manpower human resource organizations. Its mission was to ensure personnel requirements and related areas such as employment contracts, payment, social security etc. Between October 2001 and October 2002, the Job Centre gathered close to 30,000 employment candidates, carried out approximately 8000 telephone interviews and 4000 personal interviews, and, granted 3000 employment contracts. The Job Centre was also responsible for the design, organization and implementation of the "Orientation & Formation Day" catering for 3500 collaborators and employees. Between April 9<sup>th</sup> and May 7<sup>th</sup> 2002, 12 sessions took place, each catering for 200 to 300 participants.

The objectives of the formation day were both to provide collaborators with the necessary information for contributing effectively within the framework of "Expo.02", as well as providing collaborators and employees with the motivation required for effective participation throughout the 6 month event.

From the start our motto for the orientation day was "Rigorous quality & lightness of form". Our teaching concept attempted to eliminate the outmoded and unconstructive diagrammatic and rote learning approach. Instead, we adopted an interactive philosophy for our instruction. To assist us we engaged a comic professional Tom Greder. The favorable reactions of both organizers and participants showed this to be an excellent choice of approach. Tom Greders' contribution can be outlined in two stages:

### **A. Period of preparation:**

During this phase of preparation, Tom Greder was given general instructions and objectives on which to base his interactive work. Together with the other members of the organisation he also actively participated in developing the global goals of the project. During this preliminary phase, he demonstrated:

- An extensive creative capacity;
- An extensive comprehension and an enormous capacity to introduce innovative elements into the project while remaining sensitive to the global objectives of the event, co-workers and the organization;
- A sincere and serious approach to the organization and event.

### **B. Period of project realization and execution: Tom Greder:**

- Introduced the orientation and formation day with interventions and performances which captivated the participants attention and generated an excellent, productive atmosphere. He ensured that each participant remained an active part of the event;
- Assisted collaborators and presenters to participate in an interactive manner, and through his interventions generated a feeling of fraternity and motivation to the direction of the project;
- Coordinated with both presenters and the organizations responsible for the welcoming of participants.

Tom Greder very quickly became a integral member of our team. His sense of solidarity, communication abilities and flexibility contributed invaluable during the long days of preparatory work.

His work as “situational comedian” is of an exceptional standard and quality.

- He showed profound creativity. He transformed dry material and dull moments into relaxed, productive and humorous situations. Every day he expanded or renewed his repertoire to suite the specific situation and environment, or to create a positive atmosphere between presenters and participants;
- He demonstrated a coherence between his thoughts and actions;
- He possesses a large mastery of technique: For the same program he every time utilised different techniques to suit the changing needs of presenters and participants;
- He literally bewitched and transformed tired or preoccupied faces into smiling, relaxed and attentive ones;
- He possesses a great ability to improvise. His highly interactive style is not stereotypical nor pre-fabricated. To the contrary, it is a result of a direct, sensitive and personal contact he establishes with those around him. We appreciate the great subtlety of his improvisations. He reacted quickly to the diverse participants as well as the stiff moments between presenter and participants and initiated transformations, often small and subtle, to maximize the effectiveness of material and presenters;
- He compliments his technical mastery with a great understanding and use of psychology.

We encourage Tom Greder to continue to develop this form of performance and intervention within the framework of “orientation, team-building & formation” because his finesse and humour are precious in a society which often doesn’t encourage adults to dream or live the moment. A heart-felt thankyou to Tom.

Neuchatel, Switzerland, 22 May 2002.

**Isabel Heiniger**

*Responsible for orientation and formation*

**Christoph Brietenmoser**

*Responsible for Recruiting and Marketing*

# WEGA Corporate Reference

**From: MESSEN WEINFELDEN**  
**Gregor Wegmüller - Leiter Geschäftsstelle**  
**Rathausplatz - CH-8570 Weinfelden Switzerland**  
**[www.messen-weinfelden.ch](http://www.messen-weinfelden.ch)**

Weinfelden 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2004

To whom it may concern,

For the past two years, Tom Greder, alias Oskar, has been the “master of ceremonies” at the “Thurgauer Students and Apprentices Day”. This event is an afternoon multi-media event with different presenters who are responsible for the development and encouragement of students, apprentices and their respective teachers and instructors from the region.

In relation to a different annual theme, presenters are responsible for sharing with the participants inspiration and thought provocation from their successful life and work experiences in the areas of sport, politics, science and culture. The “Thurgauer Students and Apprentices Day” is under the direction of the department of Education and Culture as well as the Canton Thurgau business association.

As Oskar, Tom Greder was responsible for welcoming the participants, introducing the respective themes and accompanying them throughout the afternoon. With his humorous sketches and interactions he won the hearts of the participants and created a bridge between presenters and participants.

Questionnaires showed that for many participants, Oskars’ theatrical routines and improvisations offered a very welcomed comic relief. At the same time, Oskar also contributed to the overall themes, packing metaphors into his routines and sketches to highlight topics of discussion. Many participants retain these images and scenes far better than the spoken content of the day.

Oskars’ positive influence on the students and apprentices is of particular note. The feedback questionnaire showed that over 80% of participants found Oskars work to be in the two highest categories.

We thank Tom Greder for his huge impact and influence and would be delighted to again utilize his services for our next event. With fond regards,

Gregor Wegmüller

Project Director

## Swiss Expo.02 Orientation Day Press Reports

**"Oskar is indeed very funny. At 8:30 in the morning he manages somehow to get 200 Swiss-Germans to laugh!"** *Neue Luzerner Zeitung, Switzerland*

**"I have rarely laughed so much at such an orientation event"** *Der Bund, Switzerland*

**"In order to better transmit the message, the Job Center had recourse to the services of comedian Oskar, the situation comedy professional who was extremely well utilized throughout the long day to relax the atmosphere and to illustrate the explained situations".**

*Le Journal Du Jura, Switzerland*

**"The whole base formation was accompanied by the comedian Oskar, who lightens up the grey theory with short interludes. While director Ruedisuehli speaks, Oskar sits on a bench, pulls grimaces & provides the audience with humorous physical accompaniments to the dialogue".** *Der Bund, Switzerland*

## Swiss Expo.02 Participants Feedback

**"The day left me with very different impressions. Particularly vital and relaxing was Oskar. Thanks to him I was able to sustain my concentration and attention at a high level. A didactic and inspired idea!".** *Urs Bucher, Responsible for formation Federal Exposition*

**"My thanks go out particularly to Oskar, the entertainer-clown, who managed to keep our attention constantly awake and enliven the 'dry' subject matter. At the end of the day I didn't have a 'heavy' head as is usual do following such courses".** *Anita Epprecht*

**"Finally, I think it was a good, informative session, which, thanks to Oskar, was also relaxed".** *Rita Lanz, Weiterbildung SBB*

**"Genial idea to have Oskar. He created a totally unique atmosphere, less serious, not boring".** *Mark Gruenig*



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