

TOM GREDER



Theatre performer & director
Workshop facilitator
Corporate coach
Arts & culture advocate

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- PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW -

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 31 years as a solo act, in group 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 eight full-length productions and numerous circus and cabaret routines internationally, as well as conducting creativity, physical theatre and contemporary clowning workshops throughout the world.

As a founding & committee member of FARS (Federation of Swiss Street Arts), Tom Greder is active in supporting the development of street art and its artists.

PANORAMA: KINO THEATRE

Redefining the theatrical experience as its rotating viewing cabinet transforms reality into fantasy, Panorama provokes our senses & re-mystifies the world we inhabit.

Panorama's innovative approach to theatre is based on a pop-up structure which rotates 360° on its own axis.

As it rotates, the world outside starts to change, evolve, abstract. Not just through the actions and interventions of the actors, but also through the general public, who find themselves becoming an integral part the story. The observer is no longer simply a consumer of theatre, but co-creator of it.

"It's like a dream" Audience member

Best suited for: site specific or installation events

Duration: 180 minutes

Languages: Non-language specific

www.kinopan.com



ALL ABOARD

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.

"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

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.

Best suited for: theatre or street

Duration: 70 minute theatre, 20 to 45 minute street

Languages: Non-language specific

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.

"Deeply Funny" Time Off, Australia

Developed over 24 years in 30 countries, this prize winning comedy show draws on the traditions of the mismatched comedy duo.

Best suited for: street, cabaret, circus, stage

Duration: 7 to 60 minutes

Languages: Non language specific

www.oskarstrudel.com



"Physical control and poignant comedy"

Theatre Australasia



MOBY DICK

Tom Greder interprets Melville's epic novel of adventure & obsession with his unique and innovative approach to story telling. Incorporating elements of object manipulation, physical theatre, shadow play, comedy and audience interaction, it blurs the boundaries between observer and performer.

Directed by Philipp Boë, Moby Dick is Tom Greder's 8th full length theatre piece and his third solo performance based on the central concepts of arrival & departure, the journey in-between, and the struggle between choice and fate. It is a highly interactive performance suited for mixed ages but with a particular philosophical relevance for adults.

Best suited for: theatre

Duration: 70 minutes

Languages: English, German, French, Swiss-German, non-language specific

"Utterly hilarious, sweet and never failing to impress"

Australian Stage

A DAY AT THE THEATRE

A totally interactive show re-defining the notion of theatre. The audience is guided through a series of their own routines which are then orchestrated as a finale.

Reality becomes fantasy as the audience does not just consume theatre, it creates it.

"Brave, touching and thoroughly amusing"

The Scene, Brisbane

Best suited for: stage, cabaret or circus

Duration: 60, 30 or 15 minutes

Languages: English, French, German, Swiss-German



"Sublimely comic. Strong images of a world beyond the merely visual"

South China Morning Post, Hong Kong



ARATATRAP

"Every action has an equal and opposite reaction". Newtons' third law of physics is put to the ultimate and thrilling test. 130 ping pong balls meet 130 mouse-traps in Oskar's dynamic, explosive spectacle. Stand back and witness a science experiment going horribly right !

Best suited for: street or installation events

Duration: 45 minutes

Languages: Non-language specific

"Impeccable comic timing"

Rave Magazine, Australia

- AWARDS -

- * SSA/FARS 2015-16 scholarship for original street theatre, Switzerland
- * Brisbane Biennial Festival, Australia: 1st Prize
- * Children's Jury Gold Star: Summer Puppet Pier, Maribor, Slovenia
- * Gent Festival, Belgium: Peoples Choice Prize
- * Vevey Festival des Artistes de Rue, Switzerland: 1st Prize & Peoples Choice Prizes
- * Feldkirch Gaukler Festival, Austria: Peoples Choice Prize (three times winner)
- * Swiss Comedy Awards Locarno, Switzerland 1st Prize
- * Sierre Street Theatre Festival, Switzerland: Peoples Choice prize

- FORMATION & STUDIES -

- 2010 Stephen Motram: 'The Logic of Movement', England
- 1998 Stephan Teuwissen, 'Slapstick', Switzerland
- 1997 Justus Neumann, 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, London
 - Company Philippe Genty, 'Movement and Complicity', London
- 1988 Bachelor of Human Movement Studies (Education.), University of Queensland, Australia

- PERFORMANCE COMPANIES -

- Panorama: Kino Theatre: Creator & artistic director
- Oskar & Strudel: Creator & artistic director
- Zircologik Circus School, Biel, Switzerland: Teacher & co artistic director
- Tony's Imaginary Circus, Australia: founding member, co-writer, co-director & performer
- The Tiny Top: Itinerant cabaret performance venue, Australia, Scotland
- The Miscellaneous Gentlemen's Marching Band, Australia: Musician
- Tasdance Contemporary Dance Company, Australia: Actor, co-director
- Queensland Performing Arts Trust, Australia: Actor and musician
- Queensland Theatre Company, Australia: Actor
- Theatre Resolu, Hong Kong: Actor

- 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 diabolos 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

- PERFORMING HISTORY SELECTION -

AUSTRALIA

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

AUSTRIA

Linz Pflasterspektakel
Feldkirch Gaukler Festival
Villach Festival
Salzburg Festival

BELGIUM

Namur en Mai
Gent Festival
Chassepierre Festival
Fete De Fleur

Fete Romanes, Brussels
Rue du Bocage Herve
Zommer Festival
Z'Arts Up Festival
Espaces Speculoos Brussels

CHINA

Little Orange Castle Beijing,
Shenzhen & Chongqing

CROATIA

Festival of New Circus Zagreb

CZECH REPUBLIC

Brno International Theatre Festival

FINLAND

Jyvaskyla Arts Festival
Tampere International Theatre Festival

FRANCE

Chalon dan la Rue
Aurillac Festival
Grenoble Festival de Theatre European
Festival Performance D'Acteur, Cannes
Theatre Clermont l'Hérault
Theatre D'Arles

Fest Arts Festival International, Libourn
Festival Rues et Cies Epinal
La Marelle, Maizieres les Metz
Lez'Arts Festival Marcoles
Nezenbulles

GERMANY

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

HOLLAND

Oerol Festival Terschelling
Boulevard Theatre Festival
Mooi Wer Spelen, Delft
Rotterdam Street Theatre Festival
Overijssel Op Straat
Karavaan Festival
Artimond Festival
Lowlands Festival
Breda Festival
Straatfestival uit Vlissingen

- PERFORMING HISTORY SELECTION -

Amersfoorts Theatre Terras
Reuringsfestival Purmerend
Festpiet Udenhout

HONG KONG

Hong Kong Fringe Festival
Hong Kong International Arts Festival

IRELAND

Dublin Diversions Festival

ITALY

Pennabilli Artisti In Piazza
Anderson Festival, Sestri Levante
Montegranaro Festival

JAPAN

Iida Puppetry Festival
Setangaya Arttown Festival, Tokyo
Ueno Park Festival, Tokyo
Heaven Artist Festival, Tokyo

JORDAN

Amman International Theatre Festival

KOREA

Chuncheon Puppetry festival
Suon Fortress Festival

LUXEMBURG

Esch International Theatre Festival

NEW ZEALAND

World Buskers Festival, Christchurch

NORWAY

Porsgrunn International Theatre Festival
Vinterfestuke, Narvik

POLAND

Animo International Festival Kwidzyn
International Theatre Festival, Szczecin
International Theatre Festival, Katowicze
Buskerbus Festival

PORTUGAL

Lisbon International Comedy Festival
Festival O Gesto Orheludo, Agueda
Internacional Teatro Comico Festival,
Maia
Frestas Festival, Porto
Festival Internacional de Teatro ACERT

ROMANIA

Sibiu International Theatre Festival

SLOVENIA

Festival Ana Desetnica
Festival Lent
Emona Promenade

SPAIN

Firra Tarrega
La Merce Festival Barcelona
Festival International Clownbaret
Festival Internacional de Mallorca
Fira Titelles Lleida
Titirimundi Festival, Segovia
Festiclown Santiago De Compostella

Feria Internacional del Títere de
Sevilla
Escena Poblenou Festival de Tardor
Festival Internacional De Clown, Madrid

SWEDEN

Stockholm Water Festival
Malmo Festival

SWITZERLAND

Paleo Festival
Montreux Jazz Festival
Long Lake Festival, Lugano
Zurich Theatre Spektakel
La Plage des Six Pompes Festival
Lausanne Festival de la Cite
Buskers Bern
Vevey Festival des Artists de Rue
Swiss Comedy Awards Locarno
Sierre Spektacle de Rue
Montreux Comedy Festival
Neuchatel Buskers Festival

UK

Glastonbury Festival
Bristol Festival of Puppetry
Edinburgh Fringe Festival
Jersey Festival of the Arts

USA:

Palo Alto Children's Theatre festival
New Orleans Fringe Festival
Performing the World, New York

- DIRECTING HISTORY SELECTION -

Tom Greder writes and directs for contemporary circus, theatre, street performances and cabaret. As a director, dramaturg & teacher, he has established himself internationally for his innovative approach to creativity & physical comedy and conducts his "Finding Comedy" sessions regularly throughout the world. Highlights of his work as director include:

- * **Stockholm Academy of Dramatic Arts**, Sweden
- * **Nouveau Clown Institute (NCI)**, Catalonia
- * **Budapest Puppet Theatre**, Hungary
- * **Budapest University of Theatre & Film**, Hungary
- * **Zircologik Circus School**: Biel, Switzerland
- * **Tony's Imaginary Circus**: Australia
- * **Hiša Otok in Umetnosti**: Slovenia
- * **Markus Halbig**: Austria
- * **Duo Rococo (Jessica Arpin & Luca Regina)**
- * **Circus Wende**: Austria
- * **Apreta Cocretas**: Spain
- * **Francesco Damiano**: Italy
- * **Duo Bildhübsch**: Switzerland
- * **Emma Ribbing**: Sweden
- * **Oskar & Strudel**: Australia / Switzerland
- * **The Miscellaneous Gentlemen's Marching Band**: Australia
- * **Tasdance Contemporary Dance Co**: Australia

- WORKSHOP INTRODUCTION -

With over 31 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 authentic communication & 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, liberated stage presence.



"My experience of working with Tom was nothing less than transformative."

Lilly Blue, Australia

- 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 endeavour, 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 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;
- * Expand a knowledge and vocabulary of 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.

TOM GREDER "FINDING COMEDY" WORKSHOP

person, character, artist
life is just a rehearsal
humility don't think...do
rhythm & timing detail
surprise break form impulse
look them in the eyes eat
heaven & hell will not help you
confess sit, stand, look
pleasure, curiosity, generosity, complicity
have fun freejazz? laugh
your space, your time, your stage
say yes hear, see, smell, feel
here and now the quest
save the show accuse fantasy
transform wait for the echo
do what you always did, get what you always got
no conflict, no interest
make vodka answer the question
what do you want how much do you want it
control vs. chaos play cards
one thing at a time
create rhythms - then break them
remember the rule of 3's
you see me, you know me
it's only theatre you cannot hide
what do you want no scenario
freedom of movement, speech, fantasy
the unknown make an offer
you have the right to have an opinion... express it
less is more paradox sing

- WORKSHOP 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 re-mystifying 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 humour. 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 distension 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.

- TEACHING HISTORY -

EUROPE:

Stockholm Academy of Dramatic Arts, Masters course
Nouveau Clown Institute (NCI), Barcelona, Spain
Budapest University of Theatre & 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
Festiclown, Santiago De Compostella, Spain

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
International Clown & Comedy Series, Bern, Switzerland

- TEACHING HISTORY -

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

Teatr ZNAK, Poland

Independently arranged workshops:

Barcelona, Merida, Segovia, Vienna, Graz, Coimbra, Cardiff, Bangor, Biel, Como

AUSTRALIA:

National Circus Festival, Tasmanian Circus Festival,

Western Australian Circus Festival, WOW

Wolongong Womens Circus, Adelaide Fringe Festival

Woodford Folk Festival

Independently arranged workshops:

Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Hobart, Fremantle, Mullumbimby, Ulverstone.

SCHOOL & YOUTH WORKSHOPS:

Zircologik Circus School, Biel, Switzerland

Spaghetti Youth Circus Australia

Slipstream Youth Circus Australia

Warehouse Youth Circus Australia

Queensland Theatre Company, Brisbane, Australia

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 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.

Sir Lesley Wilson Youth Detention Centre, Australia

- WORKSHOP TESTIMONIALS -

Jango Edwards: Clown and teacher, Barcelona

"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. I recommend him to both new students and professionals".

Jean-Paul Bell: Founder of The Humour Foundation, Australia

"I love your style of teaching which I would describe as being a relaxed antipodean approach with strong European underpinnings".

Professor Jenny Gore: Director, Centre for Professional Learning in Education. University of Newcastle, Australia

"Toms ideas align with and extend contemporary educational thinking on what matters most in teaching and how to stimulate powerful learning for all students".

Sarah Fotheringham: Wales

"Tom Greder is a performer and teacher working with a potent mixture of intuition, skill and perception rooted in experience. He is a teacher who enthuses the uninitiated with passion and challenges with humility".

Lauren Flannery: Theatre director, Australia

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

Laurie McLeod: Australia

"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".

Nadia Cook: Australia

"Your workshop opened up a whole new world for me"

Lilly Blue: New York City

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 ego-less 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.

Laurie McLeod: Australia

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.

- WORKSHOP TESTIMONIALS -

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.

- SCHOOL TESTIMONIALS -

Meg Arvier: Flipstream Youth Circus, Tasmania

I had seen Tom perform on a number of occasions over the past few years and I have always thought that he was brilliant.

I have been involved in a youth circus for 4 years as a trainer, and this year 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.

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.

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.....

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”.

- CORPORATE INTRODUCTION -

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

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 realisation of its objectives.

Utilising theatrical theory and techniques he works closely with designers and presenters to:

- * Design programs which maximise the objectives of corporate events;
- * Maximise the short & long-term effectiveness and impact of events;
- * Develop a multi-disciplinary and conceptual approach to events;
- * Assist & work with speakers to maximise the effectiveness of their presentations;
- * Develop authenticity in presenters;
- * Increase the active engagement of participants through interactive performance;
- * Encourage collaborative team building & problem resolution strategies.

- CORPORATE CLIMATE -

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.

*"He literally bewitched and transformed tired or preoccupied faces
Into smiling, relaxed and attentive ones".*

Swiss Expo '02

- CORPORATE WORK HISTORY -

- * **Leadership Lab:** Working together with corporate consultant and coach Annick Zinck, Tom Greder leadership workshops.
- * **G&P Cruise Hotel Management**, Switzerland
Crew training and corporate animation
- * **Michael Page International** (Page Personnel), Switzerland. Co-writer and facilitator for "Page Personnel Management Training Program".
- * **Swiss Expo.02:** 12 day orientation program animation for 3000 employees in cooperation with Adecco / Manpower.
- * **Triaspect**, Switzerland.
- * **Nutricia (Danone)**, Switzerland
- * **Baxter**, Switzerland: team building seminar
- * **Adecco Human Resources**, Switzerland:
- * **Nedap Industries**, Holland.
- * **Celgene** – Switzerland & UK
- * **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**, Austria: Animator and performer.
- * **Newcastle University**, Faculty of Education, Australia: Pedagogy in Practice Conference

- TESTIMONIAL -

From: 2002 National Swiss Exposition / Expo.02 Job Center

Isabel Heiniger Responsible for orientation and formation
Christoph Brietenmoser Responsible for Recruiting and Marketing

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 9th and May 7th 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 non-constructive 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 favourable reactions of both organizers and participants showed this to be an excellent choice of approach. Tom Greder's 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 invaluabley 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 thank you to Tom.

Neuchatel, Switzerland, 22 May 2002.

Isabel Heiniger Responsible for orientation and formation
Christoph Brietenmoser Responsible for recruiting and marketing

- 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 Centre 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

- PARTICIPANT 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

- ADDITIONAL LINKS & CONTACT -



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