

GOOD SHIT, BAD HABITS & LOOSE WOMEN N.3

ED SCHOUTEN IN CONVERSATION WITH ZOE REDDY

Anybody invited to realize a project in 1646 is asked to engage in conversation with a previously unknown correspondent.

This conversation takes place via e-mail and stretches through the whole period during which the artists develop their initial idea into final results. 1646 invites the correspondent at the other end of this contact to figure his/her way through this actual process.

In trying to picture what result the artists' work is going to, such exchange can become a reflection on the amount of otherwise untraceable choices of the moment which make up to the artists' practice.

This issue is part of the exhibition by Zoe Reddy *Good Shit, Bad Habits & Loose Women N.3*, September 25 2009 till September 26 2009 in 1646.

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22 SEPTEMBER: Edd Schouten [ES] to Zoe Reddy [ZR]

Hello Zoe,
As you might or might not know, 1646 has asked me to conduct an e-mail interview with you.

The idea being that we have a couple of exchanges before the Friday 13.00 deadline.

Now, I know very little about you. In fact, in honesty I know practically nothing at all.

There's a rumour you're from Ireland.
So I guess my first question is: are you actually from Ireland?
For my second question I wonder if you could tell me a little about what you're doing in the run up to your exhibition which opens on Saturday?
Looking forward to hearing from you.
Greetings,

Edd

ZR - ES

Hello Edd!
The rumours are true, I am indeed an Irish lass, although the story is slightly more complicated than that.
I was born in Ireland, in the shadow of Dublin's big smoke and then moved to Melbourne, Australia when I was around 2 and a half years old.
There I stayed till I was 18 and then landed head first here in the Netherlands.
No complaints though.
I feel more Irish than anything else so yes, I am from Ireland and I am Irish (check passport for proof).
And for the second question...
In the run up to the exhibition (which opens on Friday by the way) I am cutting and taping, sewing and posing, filming and remembering and listening to a great deal of David Bowie.

I am doing the things that a fan does in preparation for a concert from their beloved, and I am also doing the things a performer does before their big show.
It's all very pure and desperate, a measured sense of naive activism. I am spending a lot of time looking at pictures of instruments and drawing pictures of my idols in gold and black.
I am getting ready for the show.

ES - ZR

I'm so excited to hear you're Irish as I'm moving to Limerick on

Saturday! So my first question:

I thought your opening was on Saturday, The day I leave, but now that it's on Friday, I look forward to attending...

ZR - ES

Glad to hear that my Irish influence brings you some joy and even better that you are coming on Friday.

The first thing you should do is get to the local bar of wherever you land (we have bars in airports that do a good whiskey) and talk to the lads around you.

Tell them you're looking for "craic" (Irish word meaning good laughs good times).

The second thing you should do is get on a bus and head to Dublin and smell those dirty streets that have fuelled the likes of Joyce, Beckett and all four members of the Dubliners.

ES - ZR

Could you elaborate a little on what you're cutting, taping, sewing, posing for and filming?

I'm especially curious as to what you are remembering and how David Bowie figures in all this.

Are you or have you ever been a fan of David Bowie? is he your idol?

ZR - ES

Well I am cutting cardboard and pasting images of myself, sewing flags that signal patriotism and welcome, I am posing for photos and the coloured spotlights that blaze across my grinning face and filming... Well the filming is now a bygone, but the film comes from the man himself, dear old D.B, David Bowie who is indeed my idol.

I grew from young lass to old lady with sounds of Ziggy Stardust, AlladinSane, the thin white duke and Lord Byron (Bowie's varying characters) and from the moment that voice hit my ears I was hooked.

ES - ZR

Who are the other idols in the pictures you are looking at? And, as you prepare for the big show, do you fantasize about being idolized yourself?

ZR - ES

Christy Moore and Mary Black, Irish singers that cut open my heart with songs that have lasted for centuries.

As I prepare for the big show I study their songs and let Bowie's video clips play silently in the background, for Bowie's aesthetic, his image (not to down play the gift of song that the man has) remain inspirational for me.

I could list many idols for I am quick to fall in love with those that stand in the spotlight (in the way idolisation works whereby one's self made composition of a figure is loved) but for now I can say that the old Irish singers and Bowie remain my inspirations and idols.

And as far as I go in being possibly idolised, well... I can't image it but I shall dream about it.

In the way that something I do or say or sing presents something to the viewer that represents that love of those you don't really know.

I don't know if being an idol would fit into my frame of mind, I am far too content re-interpreting those that remain special to me.

ES - ZR

How are the preparations going? I imagine you're busy so close to the show...

You mention the influence of Irish musicians - who I will have to check out so thanks for the indirect tip - but does the Irish literary tradition influence your work as well?

ZR - ES

Hey again Edd

Sorry I didn't reply earlier had indeed much to do before tomorrow's big bang.

Irish literature does indeed have an influence on me and my work.

I remember attempting to read Joyce's Ulysees at 12.

But more significantly I remember hearing my uncle Arthur lecture me with a booming Irish voice about the importance of the Irish writers and, from a more specific point of view, the tradition and condition of storytelling that comes forth in such a lyrical and melancholic manner in Irish literature.

It is both influential and beneficial in the way I consider writing and performing.

Many of my performances begin with a story or poem which then becomes related to a specific image and then results in a performance or video work.

ES - ZR

Bowie expressed himself through the characters you mentioned.

How do you relate that to yourself and the performer you are preparing to be?

Will you be a character or will you be yourself ... for some reason I am assuming that you will perform in your work yourself.

ZR - ES

My man Bowie...

I relate totally with his chameleon character and role playing persona.

The re-invention of one's aesthetic self and/or title is both an act of invention and self reflection.

The characters I portray are not outside myself, they are the switching blades and faces that I find which are often awakened when I see a persona like David Bowie who

references his own multi-faceted nature and therefore also mine.

So the performances that you will see in 1646 (which are indeed performed by me), as the character of Old Irish Bowie is both a projection and re-interpretation of my inspirations and a personification of someone inside of me.

Old Irish Bowie is a synonym for Zoe Bowie which is a synonym for Zoe Reddy.

ES - ZR

I like the image you create when you say you 'study their songs'. Could you elaborate a little more on that so that I can picture you studying the songs and see how you might use that in your work?

ZR - ES

Studying the songs...

By that I mean both internally and externally, reading the songs, singing them in different voices, with and without backing, reading the words and inserting my own words to find what they say to me as a performer.

There is a significance to text that comes through singing and in order to understand and convey this I need to understand their context.

With the Irish songs I will be singing this means talking to those who have sung them before me, watching videos of gatherings where these songs are shared.

The exhibition also contains a video from 1990 where members of my family sing with their full Irish voices and I watch the way they look and move and of course the way they sound.

I don't intent to re-invent these songs, I intend to taste them and describe that taste to the viewers.

Hope that makes things clear...

lfs Zoe
