

1646 proudly presents *O.K. – The Musical (Dutch Colonial)*, a project by Christopher Kline in collaboration with people from The Hague.

One can wonder: what is the significance of an individual act on a global political scale? Does what we do have any effect at all? Should we separate our plastic waste and shower for only 3 minutes to help stop global warming? Or are our individual efforts pointless in the face of global politics and are we as humankind doomed anyway? Without ever literally pointing at it, the work of Christopher Kline (b. Kinderhook, NY 1982, lives and works in Berlin) makes us experience the minute individual act as something valuable in the most lighthearted and joyful way.

What intrigues us about the work of Christopher is the way he manages to actively involve many people from local communities into his projects, working collaboratively, exalting in the joy of amateurism with a love for the 'do it yourself' craft and the sculptural qualities of the 'imperfectly finished work'. His work exudes a pleasure for the multidisciplinary, performance and humour and at the same time Kline is capable of turning historically sensitive subject matter into such surprising visual and narrative experiences that keep you fascinated and open to the politically charged content that is involved.

Over the course of the month of May, 1646 will be the location of a community theatre in the making. During this month Christopher Kline will work on the development of *O.K. – The Musical (Dutch Colonial)*. The musical is based around the history and lore of Kinderhook, a small, somewhat obscure town in upstate New York. The musical is oriented around the propagation of the word "O.K." and its associations with Old Kinderhook. The town of Kinderhook was one of the earliest Dutch settlements in the "New World", and as such its history, lore, and legends tell a microcosmic version of U.S. and world history replete with the inherent effects of imperialism, war, ethnic cleansing, slavery, and class struggle as well as all of the polarizing issues of today. With these bloody and difficult truths ever-present, the musical simultaneously focuses on the human scale, embracing the small triumphs of human imagination and ingenuity, and working to strengthen bonds within existing communities by inviting them together to reinterpret Kinderhook's history from both outside and within.

For this edition of the musical – *Dutch Colonial*– Christopher will use the space of 1646 as stage and rehearsal room, on view for the unsuspecting passer-by and will finally culminate in the resulting musical performance on the weekend of 26 and 27 May. The space of 1646 will be completely adapted as the visitor is guided through this labyrinth of interconnected spaces through which the story will be told. The musical will slowly find its shape during this month in close collaboration with singers, schoolchildren, artists, actors and otherwise involved people of the community of The Hague and surroundings such as members of the 'Mama Verhalen Koor', a local choir for mothers of different cultural backgrounds who write their own songs. Additionally, a penpalship between 4th grade students in Kinderhook and The Hague is being established in which kids will write letters, and exchange stories, drawings and poster designs which will be integrated into the project. Through this emphasis on collaboration and the collective dimension of social experience consumers are turned into producers, spectators into collaborators as they create their own personal translation of the story of Kinderhook and their everyday experience is made relevant with respect to larger political subject matter.

Since 2014 Kline has been developing *O.K. – The Musical*, an ongoing project realised in the form of an in-process community theatre musical, exhibitions, videos and publications. The project remains in flux, expanding and evolving across various iterations which focus on different elements of Kinderhook's past and present.. Past iterations have taken place at Tate Liverpool, Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw, La Casa Encendida, Madrid, Arken, Ishøj, DK and KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin and the latest edition will take place in May at 1646.

Christopher Kline (b. 1982, Kinderhook, USA) is a Berlin-based artist and musician who co-runs the project space Kinderhook & Caracas with Sol Calero, and co-produces the artist-run TV Network CONGLOMERATE.

For more information visit www.okthemusical.com