

Transcript of Interview of Jordan King by Curators Daniel Strong and Greg Manuel. (May 25, 2021)

Conducted in conjunction with the exhibition, *Queer/Dialogue*, on view at the Grinnell College Museum of Art from 7 September through 11 December 2021.

Daniel Strong:

Okay. Jordan, welcome.

Jordan King:

Thank you. Thanks for having me.

Daniel Strong:

This exhibition is called *Queer/Dialogue*. And one of the things I find interesting, which is a stupid word, interesting about your work is you being in dialogue with so many important performers and people in the past. And I thought maybe you could start just talking about your dialogue with what ... Well, what I was thinking about is, it seems odd to call it this, but the traditions of drag and the traditions of burlesque and the traditions of performance. I mean, we think of them as transgressive and of course in the face of a lot of hatred, but now we can think of them and we can talk about them and celebrate them as maybe the traditions of drag and burlesque. And I wonder if you can talk about you, how you are in dialogue with those so-called traditions, or if you think that's a fair way of putting it.

Jordan King:

I think it's very fair and I think it's very accurate. I mean, I was most active as a performer between about the age of 21 to I'd say 27, 28. And I'm a little bit older now in my life, but when I think back to that period of time, there's a few things that are interesting about that period. I mean, it was pre Google, which I feel like always makes me sound I'm ancient, but it really wasn't that long ago. And so, those of us that were coming of age at that time really had to do a lot more legwork on our own.

And also, where I lived, I mean, on the West Coast of Canada in Vancouver, there wasn't necessarily obvious traditions around performance in the drag and cabaret spaces and world that I was entering into, but I quite quickly started to realize that there was certain traditions and there was certain legacies regardless of if they were where I was physically based at the time. I just started to learn about them.

And part of it was my own interest and my own curiosity, and part of it was meeting people who were of different generations or who were older, or even just knowing that some of these spaces that I was performing in or entering had really long histories to them. So, I started to do some of that work myself, and I mean, a lot of it was going to the library to read the library books. And it did take quite a bit of digging. I mean, I was really fortunate in that I worked at a bookstore that was this extremely famous LGBTQ2S plus bookstore.

And one of the most incredible parts of that experience was that there was a used book section that people could bring books into for them to be resold for \$2 to \$3 essentially. And it was this one little minuscule shelf, but the things that people would bring in to sell, some of them were from the '70s and '80s. I basically just tapped into some of this history, and then immediately started to see myself reflected in some of this history going back as far as the '70s and '80s.

And then, yes, you're correct. Some of it was in dialogue with people that were still alive, that had been around during that time period in Vancouver. So it was a multichannel connection to some of that history as I emerged as a stage performer in drag and burlesque spaces.

Daniel Strong:

Go back to your first, maybe not *the* first, but your first public performances. Were they with this awareness of what had come before you, or were those just you getting out of the house and striking out on your own? Or were you already in tune with the history that you've been talking about?

Jordan King:

There's an interesting lineage that I wasn't aware of at the time, but now that I'm aware of it, I think is quite fascinating. I had seen one performer who was not from Vancouver, she was from New York, but she'd been brought to Vancouver to perform. And I was maybe 18. So seeing her perform, it was the closest thing to maybe what I would ... It really then inspired me to perform in a similar style to what she did, which was very different than what you would otherwise see in Vancouver at the time, which as far as the drag was concerned was pretty traditional, tiaras and feather boas and stuff, and no disrespect to that style of drag, but it definitely wasn't a space I saw myself reflected in whatsoever. And I also didn't necessarily think of myself as a drag performer.

So I'd seen this performer who was brought to Vancouver as a guest spot or out of town person. And I was hugely inspired by that. So when I then did my own first performance, I wasn't trying to copy what she did or try to recreate what she did, but I was I guess modeling myself a little bit in that vein. And it wasn't a striptease performance at the very beginning, although it was meant to be suggestive. So it wasn't more theatrical drag, it's quite padded and there's a lot that is involved with creating this caricature of a drag performer...and so I was actually wearing very little, even from the get go, and so there was a bit of an influence of burlesque, although I didn't yet at that point in time have any sense of that history. But the person that I saw performed when I was 18, who had come from New York, she was part of a lineage of performance going back as far as the '80s performing in spaces in New York that were less of a sceptre, boas and tiaras style of drag and a much more experimental and just dynamic style of drag performance.

So even though I wasn't directly connected to that, and I had never physically actually been there myself, even just that little tiny thread was enough of a connection to inspire me to then start out doing that.

Daniel Strong:

If there's a dialogue between the, I don't know how to put this, between the binaries of ultra masculine ultra feminine or that tiara drag, boa drag, feather boa drag, I'm seeing you in dialogue with those, but in the middle. And you've talked before about your relationship to the genders and being trans, you've always been androgynous. Talk about that as also a dialogue, I think, in your own mind between these traditions, whether the way to put it is between the genders or ... I mean, I don't really know the way to put it, but if I'm making any sense at all, please go.

Jordan King:

Well, no, for sure. The dialogue or the sense of understanding around gender that I guess is the most reflective of where I see myself in the context of our community and in the context of the world that we live in, and this is a really, really delicate discussion because I myself am not indigenous, I am of European, Caucasian descent.

But even at the time, and then more so even recently, I've been doing a lot of reading about North American and within indigenous communities, there really was a tradition and a space for what is now called 'two-spirit' individuals, so individuals who were, as you said, maybe would be perceived as being androgynous, they might've had characteristics that were masculine, characteristics that were feminine, they were often storytellers, they were seen as shamans in some parts of North America, they were

nurturing, but also skilled at some of these crafts that were considered women's crafts, like beadwork and sewing and stuff like that.

So, I mean, I just think I, from essentially as long as I was an independent adult in the world, not living at home with my parents, just had basically no real interest in prescriptive gendered behavior. But I think as Greg can attest, because Greg has known me for very, very long time, when I was 18, 19, first living on my own, living in the city and just experimenting, really cherry picking from what it was that I felt suited me or how it was that I needed to operate in the world on a day-to-day basis, I mean, I still had to have a day job. So in the beginning of my transition and when I was first living in the city, I mean to have a job at a coffee shop, or at a respectable, I mean, I hate saying that, but at a legitimate job, you do still have to put on a certain hat and put on a certain uniform to go and just make your paycheck. But I think even though in my mind I was like, "Oh, well, I'll dress a certain way in order to have my day job in order to get a paycheck." But then also many people have since told me, and maybe Greg can attest to this, that they remember thinking that I was extremely androgynous. But it wasn't a conscious choice to be androgynous per se. That just is the space that I exist in. But I just don't ever really remember feeling any which way about it.

Daniel Strong:

When you think about that now, Jordan, and you've spoken about this before, your desire to, I think, through the research that you're doing, your desire to educate, your desire to take that personal understanding of ... you've described it as power in performance, but also power in honoring your own identity, your own gender, or your own beliefs. Is that something that now influences the work you're doing? And you talked a little bit about wanting to break down those stereotypes and help people understand that gender identity doesn't necessitate a certain physical appearance kind of thing. Can you talk a little bit about ...

Jordan Kling:

Yeah, absolutely. And I think what I bring to the table now with a certain amount of wisdom, because I did, like many people in the early 2000s and '90s, read Kate Bornstein. I mean, it was a book that was probably on every gender studies course reading list. I remember reading it and it resonating with me, more so than anything I had ever been exposed to prior to that time. And Kate Bornstein's most well-known book from that time period, which is *Gender Outlaw*, describes living life without gender, like basically looking for, or acknowledging these gender binary systems, and then just avoiding them, just basically dancing around them.

So I think one of the things that I bring to the table that's quite interesting, and also Kate Bornstein talks about this, because she was aware as well about the two-spirit tradition as somebody who can be a storyteller and a bit of a trickster and can share some of this information in a way that has a certain amount of playfulness to it, so that it doesn't feel oppressive or prescriptive, even in the same way that a gender binary might.

And so we're now in this really fascinating space, 20 years later, where people who are now identifying as gender non-binary can be just as prescriptive in their needs around self identity as people who would say to them from the outside, "But you have to be one or the other." So there's these battles happening.

And I just think because I, and I recognize my privilege that I live in a place in the world and that I in the space that I'm in, that this isn't necessarily something that I have to confront on a daily basis, and that when it's something that you're confronting on a daily basis, and you just want to bloody well order a coffee or take the bus and not have somebody make a wisecrack at you or say something to you ... But I guess I would try to encourage even within folks that are just early on navigating some of this, that there just can be still spaces of levity and joy within it, and that it's become this really serious and political

conversation. That's what I want to try to encourage for people who are either in this situation, or also for people who are maybe not in the same situation that I'm in, but who want to understand it better.

Daniel Strong:

Yeah. I mean, I don't know because I don't really live in the space. Right now I live in *this* space, so my sense of community is a little warped or undeveloped or undeveloping, but now, I mean, I talked before about traditions of drag. In a certain time it was transgressive just to do it, and it was combative or maybe not combative, but confrontational. Now, of course, I mean, mask wearing is combative and confrontational. It's almost like what we used to consider normal life is where all the confrontation and anger is. And finally we're getting an open space or a more livable space for LGBTQ in the face of cis-gendered people losing their minds over each other and not over non cis-gendered people. It's almost like what's happened to them as we come up and come out and increasingly get along and out in the open, it's the so-called normal people who have all gone crazy.

Jordan King:

Yeah. And within the context of this discussion, too, I mean, some of this is interesting to talk about, because now here we are essentially 14 months into this existence of a global pandemic where our identity and our existence is the four walls that we've primarily been in, for most parts of the world anyway.

Daniel Strong:

I want to say the opposite of community, it's solitary.

Jordan King:

Exactly. Exactly. Yeah. So the way that I experienced my emergence and my transition and performance and the lineage that I was so inspired by, which was performance as an act of resilience, nothing has been happening with any of that in the last 12 months.

Greg Manuel:

I'm not wanting to take away the joy, but I also want to point out, I think it's interesting that Jordan and I are speaking to you from Canada and there are different issues here, but there have been, even within this last 12 months to 14 months, a lot of actual problems or issues and fights, battles raised and happening in the States in particular. And I'm going to get them wrong because I don't remember exactly which states they are, but there have been battles around transgendered washrooms and things as 'simple' as those kinds of things. So I just wanted to inject the fact that unfortunately also, even in a time of celebration, and even in a time of complete isolation, there are still powers or governments that are trying to control physical bodies. So many people have moved so far beyond the idea of genitals representing anything other than genitals. I mean, the dialogue continues, I guess, in a different way and in different places.

Daniel Strong:

I should have actually acknowledge there that when I talk about this country is being a new norm, I should acknowledge the fact that I am just one American and I shouldn't be saying ... I mean, that's part of my privilege. I shouldn't be saying that what's going on in America is what's going on everywhere. It's just my existence and not necessarily everybody's existence. That's true. And also I should acknowledge that no, not everything is happy-go-lucky in the LGBTQ world, it's just that ...

Greg Manuel:

No, I mean, I think it's fair to say all that it's interesting to me because at the same time that all of this advanced ... and I think that's the way it always goes, all this advancement that's happened, all these changes have happened that we're now having RuPaul's drag race, every country. We also at the same time are stepping backwards in certain small states, or small communities. There's certain...

Daniel Strong:

Yes, you're right, and that's certainly true in conservative states in this country, it's like every state legislature in this country is the first thing they want to do when they go in session is anti transgender bills. And some of them are absolutely ludicrous, so that is also the circumstance we're living in that as state legislatures. And again, that's just in the United States, but at state legislatures go further right, instead of addressing child poverty or whatever, they're addressing where a transgender person can go to the bathroom or not. How is this a state legislature issue? Anyway, we're getting sidetracked. And I probably shouldn't be getting too political on this, but how can I not?

Jordan King:

For sure. And I think that that's the one thing, not necessarily diving into individual states and individual bills and individual circumstances, because the United States, it's really such a patchwork in terms of either coast is more progressive and then in the middle, it tends to not be as progressive.

But regardless of that, there's still a sentiment, and there's discussion happening. And even the use of the word becomes weaponized. When there's a bill being brought to ... regardless of if it passes or not, or maybe the former president was trying to move certain things forward and then a lot of them were repealed, it speaks to a sentiment that exists and that is present, regardless of how much we might feel like, "Wow, look at how many amazing things are happening and changing," lots of things are not.

Daniel Strong:

How is what's going on influencing your art making, or your art thinking with the materials you have, and we should, at some point, get to talk about the materials that you've come across and how you come across them because it's a fascinating story, but what is your approach to art making right now having spent a year within those four walls? What's next, as far as art thinking?

Jordan King:

Well, I started to brainstorm the idea of returning to performing probably last year towards the end of the year. And it was born out of the exhibition that I put together, which still happened in Montreal, although it was never able to be open to the public, strangely, but I look back on that now as the information gathering and the legwork piece of it. And then it was towards the end of the year that I really started to think, "Well I have this drive and this desire to perform again." Anybody who knows me has known for years that I've talked about it and threatened to do it again. And they're all just like, "Oh my gosh, stop talking about it, just do it."

But in the context of ... yeah, live performance just has not been possible. And I've tried to brainstorm different ways to make it still creatively engaging but delivered in an online way and honestly, it doesn't inspire me at all, but I think like many people, I have still taken this time and just worked with the material because I have so much, and I found more than I even could have imagined existed, really, once we started to prepare the exhibition last year. So, right now I'm just playing with it a little bit and I'm brainstorming and imagining what a show could look like and what different variations of it could look like and how it could be delivered, and could it be a hybrid of something that could be viewed online for

people who aren't necessarily able to travel to a city or travel to where I'm going to put it on, but also still make it be intended to be delivered to an in-person audience? And I've just continued to work. I've continued to work on costumes and continued to write, I've continued to be in discussion with different people about putting all these different pieces together. I've continued to imagine and dream.

Daniel Strong:

You talked about research that you did young, working in a bookstore. Talk about your contact with actual archival material and how the actual artifacts of drag or burlesque or performing ... Was it already in Canada that that started happening? Or was it when you went to New York and where you lived in New York?

Jordan King:

It was when I was still in Canada. There's a few books that I've returned to recently that are quite difficult to find but that I had access to. One of them was at the library and one of them was at the bookstore. And so the one is called *The Changing Room: Sex, Drag and Theatre* and the other one is called *Under the Canvas Tent*, I believe. It's this really beautifully researched book about the whole history of the Girlie Show, the traveling burlesque show that would go to small towns and it would be county fairs that they would have off in the corner these burlesque shows under canvas tents in the 1940s and 1950s.

And so I was reading about that whole history. And within that book, there's a whole portion dedicated to the term that was used at the time, which was "female impersonators" who were performing in burlesque shows. The language didn't exist *then*, and this book was published, I think, in the 1990s, so even from the 1990s 'til now, discussions around gender were just not nearly as nuanced. So they would have used the term "female impersonators," but in all likelihood, we can assume that performers who were performing in burlesque shows doing striptease performance, even if it was in the 1940s so they wouldn't have had access to anything to medically support the way they wanted to identify, they had in all likelihood identified and operated in spaces that were primarily female.

So, it gave me this sense of just understanding that within the drag and the burlesque world, there was space for performers and individuals who were what we would now probably say as being transgender or existing outside of the gender binary or maybe being more androgynous. Again, some of this is applying modern day terminology to a time period when that wasn't available to those individuals. But all of these seeds were being planted. And I mean, this is early 2000s, again, pre Google.

Daniel Strong:

So talk about moving to New York. That was relatively recently. Wasn't it?

Jordan King:

Yeah. I moved to New York in 2017, but I started to spend a lot of time there as of 2014. And I went for the first time and really spent a good chunk of time there in 2012, sort of this gradual introduction. But by the time I moved there in 2017, I considered myself almost a part-time New Yorker.

And, I mean, I will say this. New York is, is really this Mecca for trans individuals. It's one of those cities you could really walk out the door wearing a whole outfit made out of balloons and nobody even look at you twice.

Daniel Strong:

You were working there.

Jordan King:

Yeah. I never actually performed in New York, which I'm very dismayed to say because I really should have gotten myself more organized and just made it happen, but I didn't, but I moved there to work as a makeup artist, and makeup was my profession for, I mean essentially the last 15 plus years.

And so I moved there in 2017 to work as a makeup artist. And I wouldn't say that I really went there to connect with a certain history, but I went there really aware of a certain history, so that when I was presented with opportunities to learn more about it, I mean, I just took them completely. I just graciously accepted them, maybe is a better way of putting it.

So I found myself in a situation, completely coincidentally, living in an apartment that had basically been home for generations, really, of queer artists, going back to 1978, when the person who moved into the apartment, the person that still lived there when I moved into it, had lived there for 40 years. And it was quite a decent sized department. So it was just one of those situations where the roommates changed all the time, but the primary lease holder has lived there since 1978.

And that was such a magical, incredible, once in a lifetime experience to connect with just that cohort of performers and artists, and-

Daniel Strong:

And some of the people that had lived there, you knew of them already, and it was just a surprise that, wow, these people that you had heard of and known their history actually lived where you were now living.

Jordan King:

Yeah. And not only that, but it was a connection to a past and to a history that was really tangible. When you were in this space, you really could feel it, because the apartment was mostly unchanged since the 1970s for better or for worse. Some of the people maybe wouldn't have tolerated it, but I loved it. And it really was like traveling back in time, because so much of it was New York in the '70s, and New York is a city that although it's been gentrified so completely, there are still little pockets that have just these little enclaves that have held out and resisted. And this was one of them.

So, yeah, I sensed it the second I walked in the door. And then once I learned that history and once I learned about that lineage, I mean, I was just even more in love. And that was just a completely life-changing experience to connect with the person that still lived in that apartment, who'd been there for 40 years who had been a performer in New York in the '80s and '90s, who had been a huge part of New York nightlife circles, and then had also known very well people, and in particular International Chrysis, the name of a performer who was hugely influential in New York in the 1980s and she lived in that apartment. So, yeah, it was really like a direct connection to these people that I knew about, respected, adored that ... I mean, you couldn't even dream that something that could happen in your life.

Daniel Strong:

It's almost a movie script that then this happened. I mean, the lease holder of the apartment died while you were there, and then it is you who ends up closing the apartment. And, I mean, I don't want to bring tears to your eye. It brings tears to my eyes that you were the one who ... I don't want to say ends the history, but you're, I guess, the carrier of that history.

Jordan King:

Absolutely. It doesn't necessarily make me feel sad or teary in a way, because I think the fact that it was able to be preserved, that it will be able to be shared forward with other people, all of that is hugely special and dear to me, so you're right. And I've had people say to me, "Oh my gosh, this sounds like a movie." And it at times felt like a movie because it was so magical, that whole experience. And I think you're also correct. It's important to mention that had I not been living there, because especially towards the end of Clark's life, Clark who lived in that apartment, the people that lived in the apartment really were not invested at all, they had no sense of the history of it. They just came and went.

I mean, if it hadn't been someone like myself living there, in all likelihood, had he passed away and the people that are living there had no connection to him, everything would have ended up in the dumpster. In those situations, the property management, there's no family, there's no will, there's nothing, it all just gets thrown out. So, I feel a certain sense of responsibility to continue to share that forward and also to preserve it beyond the walls of the apartment itself.

Daniel Strong:

Yeah. And then, I mean, the added wrinkle of basically having to evacuate the apartment because of the pandemic and having ... I mean, we were together when ... that was the first time we met. I think we had dinner, was it March 9th 2020 when, I mean, it was virtually the beginning weekend of COVID. And then Greg had to leave and then you had to leave and there you are clearing out the apartment and returning to Canada. I don't know. It's a crazy story, but I mean, it's a dumb question. Do you see it as an end? It's not an end. You have to see it as a beginning, as a new beginning, I suppose.

Jordan King:

Yeah. That's exactly how I think of it because I've sat in, at various times, feelings of frustration that it ended the way that it did, because I had lots of visions of ways that it could have. There could have been a more appropriate farewell, to even have some people over to the apartment to be there, hold space with them. And ultimately, I mean, I had less than 12 hours' notice to leave because they were going to be closing the borders.

But you're right. When I think back on it, I don't think of it as an end because ultimately there were so many issues with the space itself, physically that would never have been reconciled. So, as much as I clung onto that attachment, to that history and to that past, and I wanted it to live on forever, physical spaces are just not designed to do that. So, I see it as an end to that chapter, and now the beginning of a new chapter, which is about sharing and continuing to move some of this history forward.

And I think that's also what, when I think back to that initial period of performance for myself ... I never set out to try to recreate exactly how things were done at that different point in time or in that prior decade, it is about moving the history forward and taking inspiration from that and taking some of the ideas from that, but then also delivering it to a new audience, which then allows it to evolve and to continue to grow. So, that's how I think about the apartment. I mean, I'm still devastated because it was a magical space, but it was well-documented. And the most important stuff is now preserved and can be shared with other people.

Daniel Strong:

Right. Which I think is great, especially on a college campus like this primarily occupied by 18 to 22 year olds who will not have had access to such things.

Jordan King:
Totally. Totally.

Greg Manuel:

One of the questions I have about that process, I mean, I have known you for a very long time, and it's felt like you've always been very intentional in your process, in your understanding of history and your inclusion of that history. And you've talked about and described yourself as focused on and interested in, you've said it, connecting those generations through your work. And you've met a number of people that have also added to that. And I think, I mean, one of them, you've talked about New York experience. I'm wondering if you can describe and talk a little bit about Kim, who is also another source of a lot of your archival material and I think you've described as being a big influence, and I think a lot of that work, a lot of those images we've seen are represented on the website and are going to be represented in this exhibition. I think it's important to have a little bit of context about who she is and how that came to be.

Jordan King:

Yeah. The exhibition in Montreal was born while I was still living in the apartment in New York. And initially I thought it would focus primarily on the International Chrysis, the performer in New York in the 1980s, because that was a history that I was so in the thick of, living in that apartment.

So, that was what I initially thought I would present in Montreal. And then under the really wonderful, incredible guidance of somebody who I consider a mentor, who encouraged me to think, not just about sharing some of those some of that history that wasn't necessarily specific to Montreal, in Montreal she really encouraged me to think about Montreal a little bit more.

And I think I also became a little bit more curious about Montreal because it wasn't a city that I necessarily knew much about the history of trans female performers in in the same way that I did about, let's say, Vancouver or New York. And so, I first found out about a book and then I was able to get my hands on a copy of it. It's not like it's out of print, but it's just quite difficult to find; it was published in the early 2000s. And it's published in French, thankfully my French is decent, but not amazing, but I was able to read the book and just understand enough of the book, and to learn that there was a whole tradition, lineage, history, and basically a cohort in Montreal of trans female performers who were maybe not celebrated, but really had whole careers as performers in the 1960s and '70s.

Jordan King:

So the author of this book who has been a mentor and has just been so gracious and generous and incredible, she connected me with one of these women who's essentially the only one who's still alive, who's now 75 and is still alive, still totally vivacious, energetic, dynamic, just incredible. And that's Kim. And when I first made contact with Kim, I mean, it was over a long period of time because it was as COVID was happening, so although we initially planned to meet in person, and then we had hoped that she'd be able to travel to Montreal to see the exhibition, be part of it, do a talk even, none of that was able to happen. And in part it's because of her age, it's just not safe or advisable in any way, shape or form that she was traveling or doing anything.

But, throughout this whole time, we've stayed in really regular contact electronically, and she's shared some of her photos, lots about her story. And also just about that whole time period, because it is well-documented to a certain extent. I mean, this book was published in the 2000s, and the book is based around primarily oral history interviews. And although the subjects are not identified, which is partly how the author was able to gain the trust of the individuals that she interviewed, Kim's narrative is

featured heavily in it, although Kim is not necessarily named in it, but again, that was part of the consent agreement with the people that participated in the book.

And I think Kim now is a bit less self-conscious of that, so she's been a bit more open in terms of sharing with me, and also sharing her photos with me and being a bit more open to and accepting that her photos will be seen by other people, that some of the Super-8 footage, which was shown at the exhibition in Montreal, will be seen by people, and so the experience for me has been connecting with the kind of person that I could have only dreamt of meeting when I first started out as a performer, because there's so many similarities, there's so many things that overlap, and yet she was most active in the 1970s. And she spent time in New York performing at a very, very well-known, as part of a nightclub review called The Club 82 for a couple of years, and then was really active in Montreal and even in Ontario, traveling, touring as a striptease performer all through the '70s. Again, it's unbelievable, really, just in terms of how special it is.

And so I think what's noteworthy is that it's a time and place thing as well, because there's certain aspects of our ... I speak for myself. I should speak for myself only, certain aspects of my transition and that period of my life as a performer that you become a little bit protective of. And it's something that I think was best articulated in a way that I couldn't even attempt to replicate in a book called *Trapdoor*, which is that you see visibility and you see really sharing your story and exposing yourself, especially in a contemporary way, online or in media ... I just think as a trans person, you're a little bit guarded around it. It becomes a little bit like you're just not really sure where that information is going to go.

Daniel Strong:

Well, you can't read an audience.

Jordan King:

Yeah. And so for myself, that was actually a conscious decision as social media started to explode that I really started to not want to be as active as a performer because things were just being shared really quickly and almost too instantaneously. So I really respected, that for Kim, she had held onto a lot of this stuff, but also had been very cautious about putting it out and who she might share it with. So, I just think the time was right for both herself and for myself to do a little bit more work around this and to revisit it and to be open to sharing it in a specific way and with a bit more of a specific audience in mind.

Daniel Strong:

That's great. All right. Have we not covered anything that you really want to talk about, especially considering the audience that you're going to be exposed to?

Jordan King:

I mean, I think, to me, that's the perfect place to end it because I do feel really interested and excited to engage with this audience. And so I do feel like this is the intention behind it anyways. So somebody who is watching it or trying to understand what it is that I do, it's with this in mind and it's with this audience in mind that now it feels more appropriate to start to share it a bit more.

Daniel Strong:

Yeah. I mean, it just feels like the time to share. The time to get out and talk or just let people speak and let people hear.

Jordan King:

Yeah. Yeah.

Daniel Strong:

Greg?

Greg Manuel:

Well, I mean, I think, again, that's perfect. I appreciate that you are sharing with us this time and I'm glad we're able to present a platform where both you and the people who are attached to the archives that you've found are able to find a way to bring them all together. And I think that that's what's really exciting about the work that you're doing and the work that's being presented in the show, is that it really does reach back and also reaches forward and/or looks forward. And I think it's an important voice that hasn't been as heard as it should be. So, thank you for speaking to us and also for being part of this, and hopefully we'll get to have a further, bigger, longer conversation in Grinnell with the students.

Jordan King:

Love it.

Daniel Strong:

We have a website that we can continue adding. Greg and I are both becoming Webmasters.

Greg Manuel:

I don't know about that, but yeah.

Daniel Strong:

And just putting as much material out there as possible. And it's limitless. And that's the hope of the exhibition, is that it's not the beginning and ending of a dialogue, it creates a dialogue that can keep growing as long as long as we're still here to grow it.

Jordan King:

Yeah. For sure, for sure.

Greg Manuel:

Because I assume you're going to keep researching and performing.

Jordan King:

Yeah. And I do really need to put together a pitch for a book. It's one of those things where you ... I don't know, you second-guess, who on earth would even care about this, and yet as I do this work and as things like this start to happen, I'm reminded, and I guess there's a bit of feedback in seeing people or talking to people who are saying, "Oh my gosh, this is so fascinating or interesting." And I have had somebody recently reached out who found me through my website who's writing a book of their own and is doing a bit of research around the International Chrysis, and so they were so completely blown away by my experience in New York and my experience in that apartment. And so then I'm reminded, as

you said, I know it would be of interest and I think of value to other people. So that's reason unto itself to start pitching projects and ... Yeah, totally. Yeah. Just keep working forward with that.

Daniel Strong:

And also planning performance.

Jordan King:

Totally. Trust me, that part I'm thrilled about. I would be doing it even sooner if I could, but performing for your iPhone ... Not the same...

Greg Manuel:

Maybe at Grinnell.

Daniel Strong:

There you go.

Jordan King:

Trust me, I thought about it. I'm trying to give myself a January deadline, and there's somebody that I need discussion with who I just think, realistically, it won't be at a presentable enough place until probably January is the most realistic.

Daniel Strong:

Do you have a venue? What kind of venue? Will it be an academic venue, a club venue, an outdoor venue ...

Jordan King:

I wouldn't do it in a nightclub. I just think there's too many sorts of distractions. I think of it as maybe being at a theater. And there's a space in Toronto that I know some people who are connected to, but I just, again, I haven't necessarily reached out to them to say, "Hey, this is my idea, what should I do with this?" But there's the venue in Toronto called Buddies in Bad Times, that is a bar/ cabaret/ theater space that's quite small. I think that's what I would envision.

I mean, if I could only travel back in time, Dan, I would put it on at the space that I first started performing at when I was performing on my own, which was this teeny tiny little hotel restaurant lobby bar, but with a little teeny stage and tiled inside low tables with candles and fireplace. And I guess if I could only recreate that, I mean, Greg remembers it, if I can only recreate that as a set unto itself, that's what I would do. But yeah, something small and more intimate like that.

Daniel Strong:

Well, it'll be interesting to see how performance spaces and restaurant spaces evolve after this. I mean, maybe it'll all just go back to what it was two years ago, or maybe things will be reinvented. I don't know. It's too early to tell. I mean, we can dream, I suppose, of just spaces in general being more welcoming and open and progressive and that...

Daniel Strong:

All right. Well, thank you for doing this.

Jordan King:

Thanks to you both. It's my pleasure. I'm so excited that this continues to move forward.

Daniel Strong:

Yes. Yeah. I'm daunted, but excited as well. I'm always most daunted in the months before an exhibition goes up. So, anyway, good. And hopefully we will get through this and be able to bring you to town, because I know you'll love it here. Greg loves it here.

Jordan King:

I can't wait, I can't wait. I have friends that have gone ... or I have a friend that lived in Des Moines for quite a long time flipping heritage homes, and he just told me that there are some stunning, incredibly built, just amazing buildings in Iowa and Des Moines and stuff like that. So I would be so thrilled to see it.

Daniel Strong:

Good.

Greg Manuel:

We're doing it.

Daniel Strong:

All right.

Jordan King:

Cool.

Greg Manuel:

Thanks, Jordan.

Daniel Strong:

Thank you, Jordan.

Greg Manuel:

We'll talk soon.

Jordan King:

Yes, for sure. All right. Love to you both. Yes, for sure. Talk to you soon.

Greg Manuel:

Okay.

Jordan King:

Bye.

Daniel Strong:

Bye.