**Sawdust Symphony**

Welcome to this introduction to **Sawdust Symphony.**

Sawdust Symphony will be performed for Bristol Circus City 2023 on Wednesday 4th and Thursday 5th of October at 8pm. Both performances will be audio described by Sophia Knox-Miller.

The performance lasts 1 hour and takes place at Unit15. For more information or if you have any questions about the event, please visit bristolcircuscity.com or email tickets@bristolcircuscity.com.

The following introduction will take about 6 minutes to listen to and includes information about the show, descriptions of the setting, performers and costumes.

Sawdust Symphony is created and performed by Michael Zandle, David Eisele and Kolja Huneck.

They combine their passion for crafting, object manipulation and the smell of fresh wood. The program note reads: In a society where craftsmanship seems to be disappearing, this contemporary circus performance talks about the human desire to create: the process from vision to construction, the tragedy of work and the relationship between tools and humans. Three obsessed characters discover and transform their space and themselves to take the spectator into a unique DIY experience.

Sawdust Symphony is simple in design. The light is generally soft, warm and static. Gentle fades add some dappled shadow at times towards the back of the space.

The music and voices throughout the piece are recorded.

The sound of the tools and wood-work however is live.

The performance takes place on a wooden floor, a metre off the ground. Wooden floorboards make up a deck that is 8 metres across and 6 metres deep. The front and back of the deck are straight edged whereas the left and right sides of the deck are uneven, the floorboards ending in jagged edges, like an unfinished floor, floating in space.

There are multiple trap doors within the deck, used by the performers throughout as a means of disappearing below the deck as if going into the basement. The traps are unnoticeable when they are closed. They range in size, shape and opening mechanism. Each performer has their own trap that only they go in and out of in which their tools are stored too.

Additional traps are revealed throughout the performance, mainly used to store more tools and objects. For instance, a log-broom which is made simply of a wooden broom handle stuck into the side of a log instead of a brush. The log is approximately the size of a person’s head.

David’s trap is the first one to be used. It’s located at the back of the deck, in the middle. It opens downwards, becoming a rectangular hole, large enough to stand in comfortably. When David is stood in it, the deck is at waist-height and becomes a handy workbench for his woodcraft.

Like his colleagues, David is a non-disabled white man, just turning 30. He is 175 centimetres tall, or five foot seven. David is slim and toned. His blonde hair is pulled into a low bun. He has a chiseled jawline with a trimmed beard. He wears a brown, sleeveless, knee-length cotton tunic, with buttons down the front and string tied around the waist. The tunic flows with his movement, flaring out from the waist. Under the tunic David has a long sleeved dark top and dark trousers with black lace-up boots. In the first scene, he wears a loose grey jumper over his outfit.

David has a serious, determined expression at most times, focused on the task at hand. He is a confident mover and crafter, yielding tools with firm hands and expertise. Such as a wood-lathe: an oblong table-top machine made of a steel base and two short pylons sticking upright at either end. Wood is wedged between the pylons onto a rod. The wood-lathe spins the wood at high speed which enables quick woodcarving with the use of chisels.

Michael is 34, and slightly taller and thinner than his colleagues. Michael’s hair is short and brown, he has a short scruffy beard. He has a soft face with brown eyes. He wears a loose navy t-shirt with three-quarter length grey trousers over slip-on leather sandals with wooly socks. He presents as more relaxed and less expert than David. His trap is located towards the middle on the left side of the deck. It opens upwards in profile to us. Michael often opens it enough to look out, eyes wide and alert, before pushing it further back. When open, the door stays upright as opposed to flipping all the way over. Michael is lanky, with an air of child-like scrappiness.

Kulja is the same age and height as David with a similar athletic build. Kulja however is clean-shaven, with no head or facial hair. He wears a plain grey button-down shirt, rolled up at the sleeves, over dark-green chino trousers, with brown suede shoes. His clothes are wrinkly and become quickly covered in a white paste: wood glue. He enjoys the feeling of it on his skin, scooping the glue up from below the deck with his bare hands. It’s white and viscous. His head, face and arms become covered with it and his clothes are streaked with the white paste. It drips and puddles onto the deck, it is never wiped away.

Kulja’s access to the deck is via loose floorboards. He comes out of loose boards near the front left of the space and find some others towards the right through which he re-enters the deck. Kulja moves slowly, his body is loose and limp. His relationship to the deck and the materials is through direct contact and immersion. When Kulja is on the deck, the light generally becomes colder with a grey-white tone.

Credits:

Authors and performers:

Michael Zandl, David Eisele, Kolja Huneck

Artistic advice: Lucho Smit, Darragh McLoughlin

Sound design by Juliano Abramovay, Lasse Munk

Light design by Sanne Rosbag

Set design and special effects by Philipp Dünnwald and Michael Zandl

Further information about the artists, including a full list of credits is available at sawdust-symphony.com

This audio description has been commissioned by Handstand Arts. It is recorded and produced by Sophia Knox-Miller.