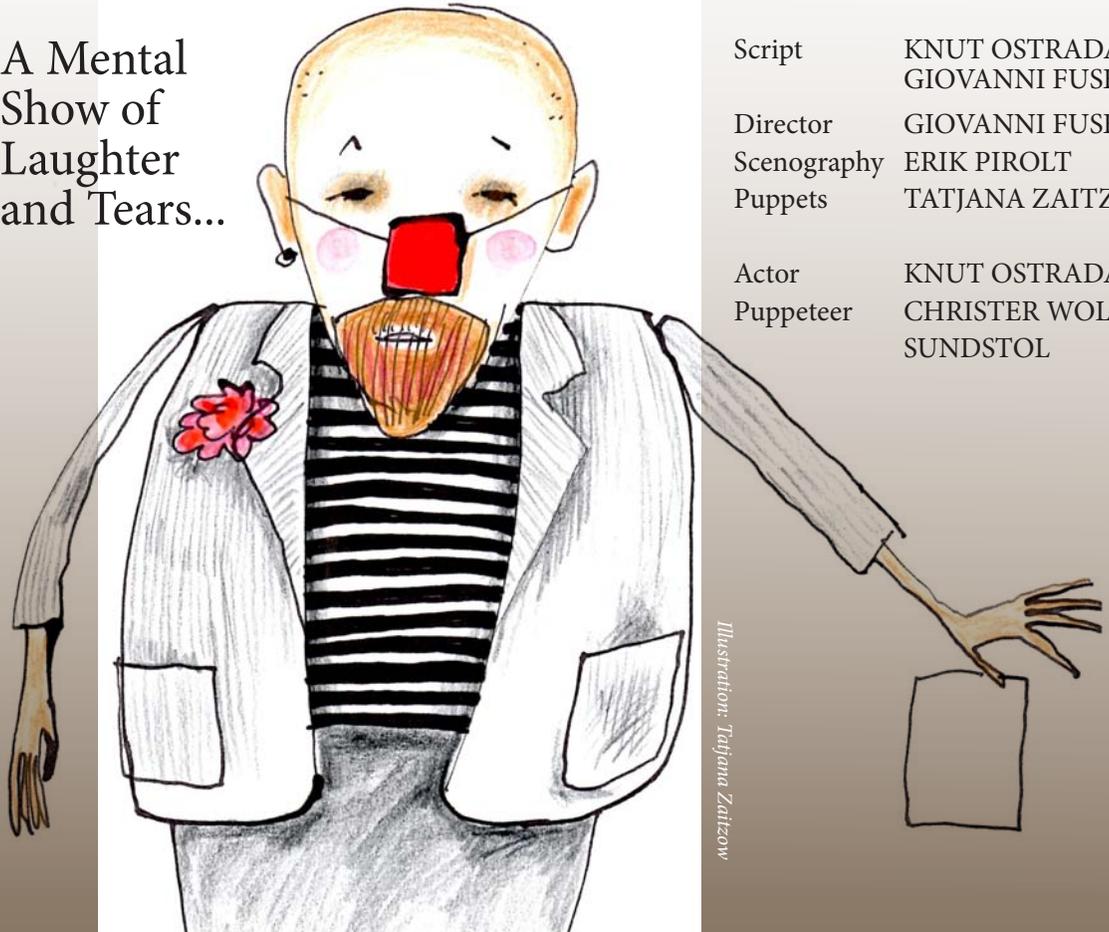


KnØs PRODUCTIONS presents

DEPRESSION

THE MUSICAL

A Mental
Show of
Laughter
and Tears...



Script	KNUT OSTRADAL GIOVANNI FUSETTI
Director	GIOVANNI FUSETTI
Scenography	ERIK PIROLT
Puppets	TATJANA ZAITZOW
Actor	KNUT OSTRADAL
Puppeteer	CHRISTER WOLD SUNDSTOL

Illustration: Tatjana Zaitzow

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Depression: the Musical is based on the story of the author, Knut Ostradal, who in a period of his life found himself in the mysterious land of depression.

Knut emerged from this journey with the need of the storyteller to share with the world what he found in these uncomfortable depths.

This is the second version of Knut's story. In the first show, presented in 2018 with the direction of Kristian Landmark and with Giert Werring as puppeteer, Knut was telling his story as himself, with a series of puppets in supporting roles.

In this new version of the show, it is the clown Theobald who is telling the story of his journey into depression and back, and the puppets are now a chorus of characters holding

the space of the story with him. In parallel with the translation from Norwegian to English, my work as a director has been to turn a story that was previously told as a past event, into something happening in front of your eyes, in the here and now of a Clown's life. The presence of the puppets has grown as well as their integration with Theobald's story. The vocal creativity of Christer as a puppeteer and a singer, has allowed the show to explore further the edge between text and songs, between rhythm and music.

The Red Nose Clown and the Puppets are all theatre masks, essentialized and transposed forms of humanity. Their language emerges from the body: feelings, urgencies and emotional states become gestures and

sounds and, eventually, words and songs. The Clown and the Puppets have guided us in our quest for humour in a story of darkness. And they have helped us to explore these questions:

Is there music in the land of depression?

Can we sing while we are drowning in sadness?

*Can we laugh at the edge of the abyss?
Or at least smile?*

We are happy to share our exploration with you. Enjoy the show !

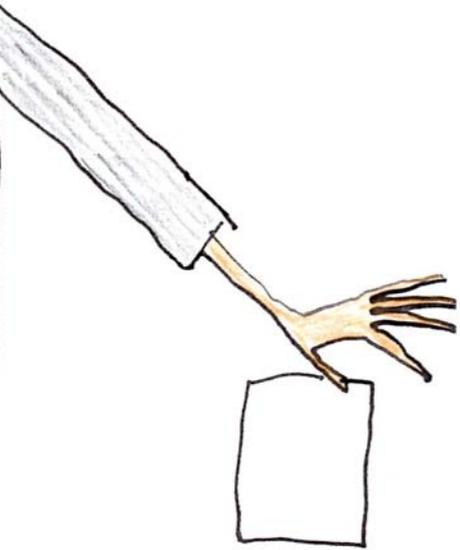
Giovanni Fusetti

Yesterday is history

Tomorrow is a mystery

Today is a gift –

That is why we call it the Present



Dear Audience

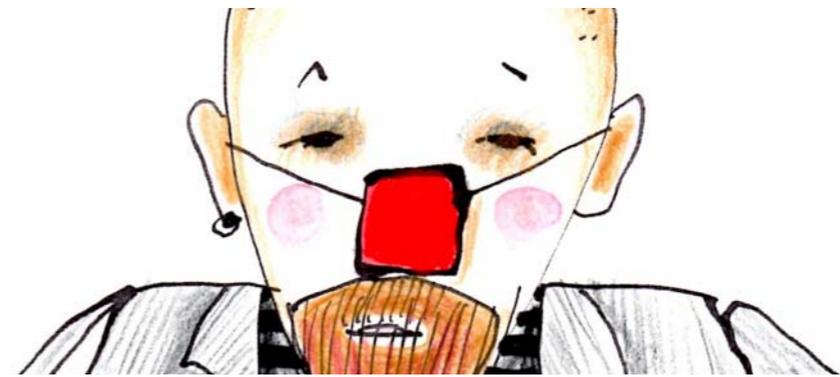
This performance is about depression – the state of lacking energy and appetite that occurs when the brain doesn't produce enough serotonin and dopamine for persons to function as they wish.

The story that is told is based on my own experiences in the deepest darkness of depression – and although there are many paths into depression, the symptoms that characterize it are quite similar.

There cannot be many people without

past or present contact with depression, either self-experienced or with a person close to you or farther away.

Mental health is still a topic that many find difficult to talk about in public. There is a so-called stigma associated with being mentally ill in one form or another. It is easier to show up with a plastered leg and be able to state that in eight weeks or so the crutches can be thrown away and life may continue as before.



The main purpose of our performance is to show that it is possible to leave the darkness for the light and rediscover the meaning and content of life.

The feeling of being born again is strongly present – without any guarantee that the condition will continue indefinitely. I felt like I was eating life with a tiny teaspoon – now it's like eating it with a big ladle.

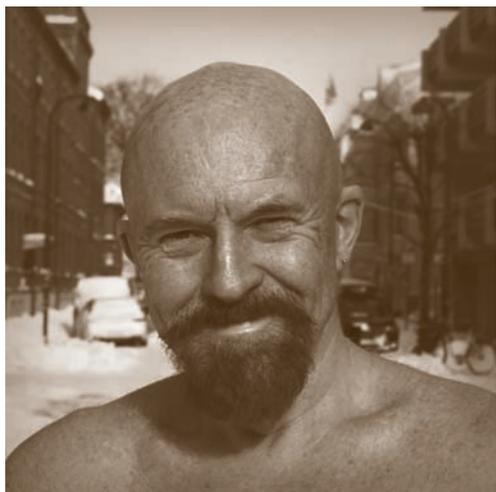
To you who are struggling – do not give up! There is hope for light at the end of the tunnel even though it may never have looked as dark as right now.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank my therapist Karl Erik Karlsen and the attending staff who have taken care of me during my illness. I would also like to thank my wonderful production team who have been so dedicated and made all their artistic and human resources available.

The title of the show is *DEPRESSION – the Musical*. It is a kind of invitation to seriousness as well as entertainment. I have chosen a clown as a character to tell the story. The clown exists at the intersection of tragedy and comedy – with his characteristic face made up with black lines under his eyes symbolizing tears and a big smiling mouth. A serious topic becomes the subject of ridicule – some elements are absurd and filled with the comedy of everyday life.

It is not at all our intention to downplay a serious condition by using comedy. It is rather our conviction that a liberating laugh may open the way for conversations that can be of help to those caught in the glaring claws of darkness.

Knut Ostradal



KNUT ØSTRÅDAL is a 1947 model, and a happy Jubilado/pensioner living in Barcelona and Kristiansand. He worked for almost 40 years as a high school teacher at Kristiansand Cathedral School where he taught drama, French, English and film as an elective subject. After majoring in drama/theatre, he went to Paris and the *Ecole Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq* – and theater has been a hobby and a profession since childhood. He has been active in amateur theatre, professional theatre and film in a number of projects and productions. In 1979 he co-founded *Fabelteatret*, which created a number of revues with flair and sting in the 1980s.



CHRISTER SUNDSTØL was trained as a drama teacher at UiA in 2013 and has since had many balls in the air. Following graduation he has worked as a drama teacher at the Cultural School of Kristiansand municipality, where he has staged everything from small theatre performances to large musical productions. In 2013 he created the improvisation group BARE FLAKS (“Sheer Luck”) with student friends, still playing weekly for children and adults. The group has also held several hundred workshops, and has even been named Norwegian champions of theater sports. Sundstøl has also been involved in other performances, such as revues, *Jernbyrden*, *Juleevangeliet* et al. What matters to Christer are theatre plays and playing in life.

ERIK PIROLT is no scenographer. However, since Knut Ostradal asked him, he couldn't say no. Otherwise, Erik spends his time making films and art.



TATJANA ZAITZOW graduated from NTH in 1966. She has experience as architect, dancer and craftsperson. In 1978 she established Petrusjka Teater where she was artistic director in addition to set designer, playwright, character actor and project manager for 30 years. Petrusjka Teater has participated in the Puppet Theatre Festival in Kristiansand for several years with performances and exhibitions, and received the Tyrihans Prize in 1997.

Tatjana has also participated as a puppeteer in Agder Teater's “Dustefjerten and the big marzipan party”. She has also toured with performances in large parts of Europe, in Russia and in Canada. Now she is retired but still active as a character designer and maker for other theatres.





GIOVANNI FUSETTI

is an Italian multi-disciplinary fool. He trained at the *Ecole Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq* in Paris where he was also pedagogic assistant and then teacher of improvisation. He is the founding pedagogic director of *HELIKOS, International School of Theatre Creation*.

Giovanni works internationally as a pedagogue, teacher, director, devising consultant and process facilitator, exploring theatre in performance, artistic training, education, therapy and political action. He is passionate about midwifing clowns, bouffons and masks. In his pedagogy, he integrates physical theatre with different practices of physical and emotional awareness, for the training of the actor/poet/creator. His 30 years of pedagogical research include training in Theatre in Education, Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed, Gestalt Therapy, Reichien Analysis and Process Work. You may learn more at helikos.com.

ROBERTA BIANCHINI

The Red Noses are designed and handmade in leather by Roberta Bianchini, Maskmaker, Italy



Roberta Bianchini

<https://ro-bianchini.wixsite.com/roberta-bianchini>

DEPRESSION...

Is a mental illness

Marked by a thoroughly low state of mind

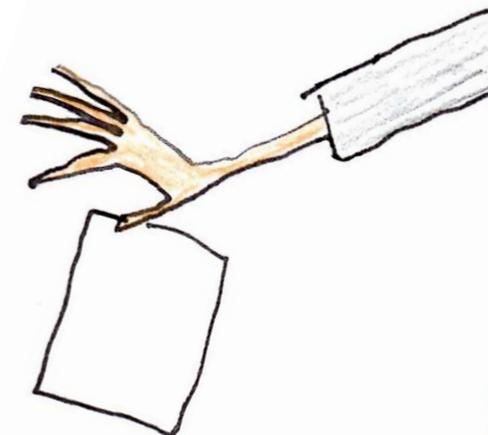
Combined with low self esteem

And loss of interest in activities

That normally give pleasure

Special thanks to Ingrid, Tori, Emil Otto, Ellen, Eivind who cared; Erik, Elin, Maja, Camilla, Anne-Karen, Mette, Evelyn, Colleen, Arne, Britt, Josefine, Rune B, Victoria Millard for text inspiration; Roberta for the excellent red noses ... and to the many others who cared and helped me back into the light. Thank you to Jorn A Jensen for the layout of the programme and the poster – and to Tatjana Zaitzow for the wonderful puppets, and drawings to the poster and the programme. Also, a special thank you to Kristian and Giert for their wonderful work in the birthing of the first version of the show.

Finally, a huge thanks to Norsk Kulturfond for funding this production. Their support of our vision of addressing mental health artistically and with humour, is very inspiring and heart-warming.



CURTAIN FALL FOR A CLOWN

Life is not fair. Illness and accidents strike relentlessly, brutally ending lives that should have continued for so much longer.

I recall an indelible experience I had in Barcelona. I was attending a Master Class in clowning and one morning the principal Jango Edwards came to inform us that his close clown-friend Monti was hospitalized with aggressive cancer and had little time left. Together with other clown friends, an evening gathering was organized outside the hospital, honouring Monti with a final greeting.

That evening, about 100 persons assembled outside Hospital Val d'Hebron north of Barcelona – some with their red noses on – and at 9.30pm a light was lit up on the 9th floor. It was the signal to light candles – and then we stood there in silence for over half an hour – in dignified devotion, channelling all our energy to the man who was about to leave Earth.

Behind me stood a mother with her two-week-old baby in a sling – and thoughts of life and death took on an almost concrete shape.

A child who had just entered life – and up there, a man who was about to leave it.

The candles were lit, but a light wind made us protect the little flames with our hands to keep them alight.

Watching the little flame almost being blown out, struggling to keep burning, alternately lighting up and becoming weaker, provided us with thoughts about the fragility of life.

At about 10pm, a quiet version of the song *Smile* was mimed in sign language and then came a resounding applause.

Afterwards, we remained there for a few minutes in quiet homage, exchanging hugs and drying tears. The night had sunk and the sea could be seen in the distance. Then we walked towards the city again.

At about 11pm, word came that Monti had left this life at 9:56pm – in that transitional moment when *Smile* was sung to its end and the resounding applause commenced.

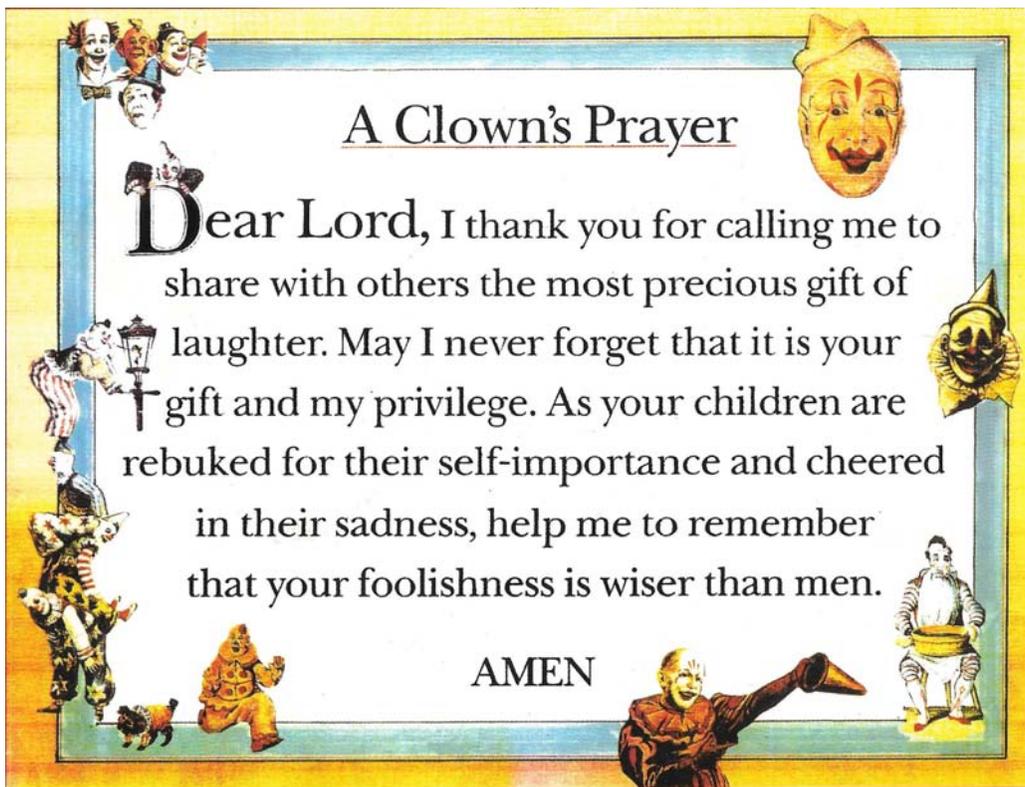
A worthy farewell for a clown!

Knut Ostradal



Illustration: Tatjana Zaitzow

**Another Romantic
enters The World ..**



This prayer is used every year at the annual Clowns International Service, on the first Sunday in February at the Holy Trinity Church, known as The Clowns' Church, in Dalston, London.

Funding:



NORSK KULTURFOND



KRISTIANSAND KOMMUNE



AGDER FYLKESKOMMUNE