

# ARTIST'S FAQ

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## Where did you start out?

I wanted to study Law, so I could buy my mum a house, but the thought of being at uni with a load of toffs really put me off. The idea was to study Theatre, my second favourite subject, and do a Law conversion course. When I think about it now being a barrister and being an artist is pretty similar, we all deal in lies! I studied Performance Art (then called a BA Modern Drama) at Brunel. I spent 3 years cutting myself, doing 24 hour performances, filming my feet in Berlin and generally being an annoying student but I left elated by Performance Art and its potential. For a while I made work with some lovely friends from Brunel but that fizzled out as jobs, babies and new countries got in the way. But it was in that company that I began to understand the audience and my job as an artist, mostly by doing it very badly at first. We got very sucked into writing funding bids and doing websites before we knew anything about what wankers call "craft".

## When did you start making your own work?

I was nearly 30. I was running Chisenhale Dance Space as Executive Director (real life and bills meant I worked most of my 20s in dance, weirdly, having had no training at all!) I was bumming around Bethnal Green Working Men's Club at the weekend doing a night there and getting further and further away from my dream of being an artist and touring the world saying something that people actually identified with and liked! I came to a crossroads when my best friend decided to move to NYC... should I jack it all in, and get a better paid job and settle down or should I jack it all in and make a fucking killer show.

The Junction in Cambridge said that if I was interested they had this scheme called *Escalator* and I could make a one-woman show on it, if I could come up with a good idea. I got a positive STI result on the very first occasion I bothered to have a test and the rest, my dears, is history. I think by that point I understood what an audience needed.

## Where does your inspiration come from?

I get very angry about something, or something takes over my life and I can't get it out of my brain, it consumes me. I don't pick the things I think other people will like... that's a rookie mistake. Nor do I try to be clever about something, that gets me nowhere, because I am not academically clever, I am emotionally clever. I wait to be moved, but I am also always on the look out. For the look of shows, sets, costumes and worlds I just KNOW somehow. That sounds a bit cunt but a subject will warrant a certain look and I send a seed of an idea to David Curtis Ring and he brings everything to life. With music something equally synergetic happens when I get in a room with Tom Parkinson. Sometimes it's all about who's in the room.

## Who are your favourite artists?

I am a very direct person and I don't suffer fools. I don't like wooly stuff that doesn't know what it is. I like funny people, I like things that genuinely move me physically, I like conceptual stuff that makes me feel something or gets me fucking mad, I like artists that are trying to change something. I guess I am always working so I don't get to see huge amounts, one of my plans is to see more ART, of all disciplines.

**Top Faves:** Brian Lobel, Tom Parkinson, Action Hero, Dr Brown, Romeo Castellucci, Scottee, Kim Noble, Ann Liv Young, Richard Dedomenici, Figs in Wigs, Jeremy Deller, The Vacuum Cleaner, Ivana Muller, Iona Kewney.

## What is your process of making work?

- Read a load all the time, talk a lot to people outside of the art world.
- Get fucking angry
- Explore why I am so angry for a while (is it personal or universal?)
- Become as much of an expert about that subject as I possibly can (speaking to people, reading, asking questions)
- *THEN* choose the form of that piece; for me form is dictated by subject not the other way round.
- Begin to just feel my way around the subject and make lots of notes on the large wall of my studio, anything from quotes, to music, to objects etc. (I don't write anything off for quite a long time, I let things fizz up against one another creating new ideas without my help)
- I consider what I want my audience to leave feeling. A very important decision.
- I plan the narrative arc. All work, believe it or not, simply has to have a beginning, middle and end.
- I then sit and write a draft, with the help of quite a few people who mentor or dramaturg my work... but it's only practical time and sharing the work that actually tells me anything so I write, get it up on its feet, share (in any raw states, usually crying) to people I trust and re-write, repeat.
- It's ready when it's ready.

## What is an average working day for you?

I get up early-ish and I try and eat a good healthy breakfast.

If I am not on tour I will try and do admin first thing, it's when my mind is quickest. I rattle through things quickly nowadays. If I can I go into the office, there is always so much to do (that isn't art) with the team. If I am writing, I go to a secluded place and just power through. It takes me ages to start and I need a lot of quiet. I am trying to exercise more and drink less.

## **Do you prefer devising or writing?**

Oh that's hard. They are different beasts, the latter is a solitary pursuit up in the brain and slow and sort of hard to figure out and I love that pursuit. The other for me is very social and very very fun, it's when things start to find colour and real humour and real darkness and I get to hang out with my collaborative team and people I love. So both I guess?!

## **Ideally, what do you want your audience to feel/think when they leave one of your shows?**

For every thing I make, the first is always 'entertained'. But then it totally depends on the project. I stick to 3. One aim should always be an active one, it should promote action when the person leaves in some way.

## **PRACTICAL FAQ**

### **How can I buy tickets for Bryony Kimmings' next production?**

Click on tour dates and you will find everything we have booked there. Or sign up to our newsletter

### **Can you assist me with my studies?**

If this FAQ hasn't been as helpful as you need we will try our best to answer your questions. Send a reasonable amount over to [info@bryonykimmings.com](mailto:info@bryonykimmings.com)

We no longer have the time to do all the phone interviews requested and can't do face to face meetings.

### **Can you mentor me?**

Bryony mentors three artists a year. If you would like Bryony to mentor you please send an email with some information about your project and what you are looking for to [info@bryonykimmings.com](mailto:info@bryonykimmings.com)

If we don't have the capacity we will always try to pair you with someone who we think will be good.

### **When is your next artists workshop?**

There will be at least two chances to do the weeklong workshop in 2015. Keep an eye on the website or sign up to the newsletter (on the Contact page of the website) to be first in the queue.

### **Where can I find that stuff you did on equal pay for artists?**

The 'I'll Show You Mine' debate and action thunders on here: <http://illshowyoumine.org>

This is the original post viewed by 100,000 individual users so far!

<http://thebryonykimmings.tumblr.com/post/67660917680/you-show-me-yours>

### **How can I join the Solo Artists Group?**

Just drop us a line, as long as you work alone and need friendly support you are IN!

**BRYONY  
KIMMINGS**  
**LTD**  

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**Hackney Empire  
291 Mare Street  
London E8 1EJ**

**[info@bryonykimmings.com](mailto:info@bryonykimmings.com)  
[www.bryonykimmings.com](http://www.bryonykimmings.com)**