**Graham Rawle**

I first met the peepers in 1999, a year before they formed as a group. I’d been invited to create a 4,000 square foot supermarket installation for Expo 2000 in Hanover. I needed helpers and Margaret suggested some Brighton graduates she’d kept in touch with who she thought would be good. I started out working with Lucy and Miles, and soon others came on board to help out: Chrissie, Andrew, ‘Little’ Graham Carter, Jenny and Lenny, Luke and Chris Jocelyn––along with others from outside the group.

For six months, most of us spent all day every day working together. We had great fun, but the hours were long, the diet was poor and the conditions were sometimes less than uplifting. Because the budget was so small, for the most part people weren’t even getting paid. I assured them that, like the physical exhaustion they were experiencing, this could be extremely character building. I also encouraged them to think of hot glue gun burns as the battle-scars of creative endeavour. Margaret was both surprised and grateful that nobody murdered me for what I put them through. I had to agree. The team were incredibly loyal to me and not being murdered was an unexpected bonus.

The team were skilled and clever, but I think what impressed me most was their spirit – the way they set about every task with such enthusiasm, seeing each aspect of the work as an opportunity to come up with something funny and interesting. There was real collaboration. Everyone took pride in the work they were doing without feeling the need to claim ownership of it. (Peepshow have since proved to be adept at working as a group while retaining their individuality.) They had a finely tuned sense of humour that was very much akin to my own. We laughed a great deal at the things we were creating. I don’t know if anyone else did; we were probably giddy from sleep depravation.

Looking back, I think we learned some valuable lessons: that driving while you’re asleep is a bad idea, as is Domino’s pizza, and that when searching through a bag of second-hand clothes, what at first may appear to be a fur coat might turn out to be a dead fox. There were other personal discoveries and insights too, which could be summed up thus: If you spend too much time scrabbling round in the dirt collecting rubbish, sooner or later you’re going to come across a carrier bag full of human shit.

With EXPO up and running and these life lessons fresh in their minds, the group went on to form the fabulous Peepshow collective. In the intervening ten years, Margaret and I have watched them go from strength to strength as well as from studio to studio. Peepshow are like a family and they make us feel like we are part of that family, which is a great honour. We hope this means they’re going to be looking after us in our old age.