



## Interview with Kim Sonderholm

By Amanda Tucker

### First of all, where are you located?

I live in Copenhagen, Denmark, and the first 28 years in Aarhus, which is the second biggest city in Denmark.

### Are you fluent in English?

Well, I think I am, but maybe a little accent may slip in at times, you tell me. I used the English language many years ago and was always complimented for sounding like an American, but the past years I haven't used it as much so I might be somewhat rusty (I know I am but I'm working on it).

### What is your all time favorite horror film?

The only film that ever, truly, really, for real, scared me, was "The Exorcist", but then again, I was 12 years old when I saw it. I wasn't able to sleep for like two weeks after that. What scared wasn't as much Linda Blair's head-turning, vomit spewing and having fun with a crucifix (forget that expression, please). During my teenage years I was a horror junkie, or rather a slasher junkie. I was almost addicted to the Friday the 13th, Nightmare on Elm Street, and Halloween series. Unfortunately Denmark isn't really that much into producing horror flicks, but I love the few that was made here, "Flænset" ("Shredded") by Heini Grünbaum (had to endure a lot of hard criticism but that's typical for danes), "Angel of the Night" and "One Hell of a Christmas" by Shaky Gonzalez. All an acquired taste, definately, but I love them all.

### Who is your greatest influence?

Obviously I get inspired just as well as anyone else, but there's really nobody I can pinpoint as being the reason why I do what I do.

### How long did it take to film Brutal Incasso?

The filming in itself took only 21 days around August 2004, but the whole process took 6 years in total. Let me elaborate, it started out in 1999 when we began to write it. Claus Lund, whom I studied acting with, and myself had thrown ideas through the air for months and finally sat down to write it. It started with a few loose ideas and we started building a story from that.

The first idea was actually two money collectors beating up a Santa Claus in a mall (who haven't always dreamed of that?), and when we filmed it was changed into a mime, since it was in the middle of summer. The scene was however cut in the end, although it can be found as bonus material on the DVD. (In my own way I got my revenge on Santa though, watch the short film "Blank" and you will know what I mean!).

We wrote for over half a year and by then in the summer of 2000, I was about to start the last year of acting school and my time ran low. The script was hidden away for a couple of years until we started talking about actually making the film. I had a quite good impression of a director, Jonas Kvist Jensen, with whom I had

already worked on a couple of projects and as he was looking for his next project and gave him the script and suggested making it. At first he had a lot of doubts but changed his mind, luckily. He felt some things were missing in the script, so he added on a few good things. It was a long process; writing started in 1999 and we had the final result of the film shown for the first time for a public audience on December 8, 2005. Since then we've worked on distribution and it's been released in several European countries, but we're still very interested in getting distribution in the states and the Asian countries. At the point of me writing this there's some negotiations with a few distributors in the US but nothing certain yet.

## **What was it filmed on?**

Well, a lot of people asked if it was actually 35mm or high definition, but I have to be honest and say no, it was DV, although obviously a good DV cam. But people asking, it must mean that they find the final result impressive, hehe.

## **How has the response been from those who have seen it?**

Well, the response have been great all over, everybody have had a lot of positive stuff to say about it. All, except a Danish film forum site who've been against the film from the beginning. Don't ask me why, I don't have the answer, but I'm afraid a lot of Danes have a tendency to think that "if you can't join them, spit on them". Don't really know what it's about (we call it "jante"), but I think people really should be better at trying to improve the conditions for indie film, but conditions are rather miserable. Luckily there's still a few people out there who is capable of seeing the possibilities, and those are the people I chose to stick with.

Apart from this certain Danish film forum, the response have been fantastic, so much so that it won the Audience Award for Best Film at the Weekend of Fear Film Festival in Germany in April 2006. That was fantastic and encouraging news to get. Other than that, it has been shown on Tromanale in Germany, a festival in Russia, and a couple of festivals in the US.

## **Any plans for US distro?**

Still looking, but we're not stopping until we succeed! So with my stubbornness, it's just a question of time.

## **I hear that you are involved with Neroscopic Unlimited, and you will be filming a scene from Denmark. How did that transpire?**

Yes, I've been writing a bit back and fourth with Tracy Crockett of Neroscopic Unlimited, and we decided it could be great fun if I shot some stuff with myself for his zombie film "Water". I have quite free hands, so I'm probably going to come up with something gory. At this point I don't know what, but I guess we'll see!

## **What is Blank about?**

"Blank" is a 33 min. short, originally meant to be a part of a trilogy named "The Bizarre Method of Death". There was supposed to be "Blank", "A Minds' I" and "Dark World", but only two of the three were ever finished, and ironically enough, the one that never finished his film, "Dark World", was the same guy who took the entire initiative to the collection, so obviously it never became a reality. So the makers of "Blank" and "A Minds' I" decided to release the two films on their own - going quite well. Both were shown a number of times on Danish Television and various film festivals.

## **I've heard some about a project you are working on called The Horror Vault. Can you tell us a little about that?**

The Horror Vault is inspired by "Creepshow" and "Tales from the Crypt". I want to do a feature length collection of short horror stories. Some of them are already finished and I have a few being made. Among others, the director of "Hellride", Emil Ishii, is working on one, and the producers of my own feature film "Craig", Jan T. Jensen and Jim Pedersen, are also currently working on a chapter for the collection. My hope is to have it released sometime next year, but time will show! It's a quite bigger project than it may sound at first. We also have additions from the US and Australia, but it's very exciting!

## **What is the release date for Hellride (Rovdrift)?**

Well, we currently hope the middle of September, so yes, it's getting close and nobody is more excited than I am. It's in the final steps of editing right now so it's definitely coming along. I was fortunate enough to meet Emil Ishii, the director, at this project, and we worked so well together that it definitely will not be our final project together. We have the same taste in horror, in many ways we think alike. When we shot "Hellride" in the spring we often came up with ideas at the same time, and all it took as a look and that was it! "We'll do it!"; that was awesome. We're currently discussing making, like said earlier, a bit for "The Horror Vault" together and I've just presented him to a feature script that he's very interested in doing, hopefully next year, so time will show, more cool stuff is coming up.

## **When did you know you wanted to be a director?**

Actually, I never really did, and I still have doubts if I do! I've always had an idea for a horror film on my own, in many ways a quite personal project, in other ways not at all, but as I recently bought a high definition camera it became clear to me that I had to make this movie, and I could not think of anyone I wanted to play this role but myself. I am after all an actor as a first priority and I have it all my in head already! Then after some shooting, I fell in love with an actress in the film, seemingly incredibly unprofessional, right? But we couldn't help it, and we're together today.

But with that said, I've had my eyes opened to what a fantastic feeling it is to see a film you've had transpire before your eyes so many times, actually coming to life on a screen. Yes, I know it's a cliché, but then, clichés are things that has been said a little too often and therefore they must be true. It's an amazing feeling, and "Craig" definitely won't be my last project as a director.

## **Do you have any funny or interesting set stories?**

I'm always doing a serious piece of work in my job, and I have always tried my very best and turn up for shots well prepared, but that doesn't mean I can't still have fun doing it. I'm afraid I can't come up with any specific things. I've experienced a lot of things that are ripe for blooper reels, and I've been responsible for many of them myself! The worst, though, is always when you keep messing up the same place over and over again, and you simply cannot help it! That can be a living hell sometimes.

## **What direction do you see indie horror going in?**

I'm glad you ask indie horror specifically, and not indie film in general. I think the future for indie films in general is quite hard to tell. Distribution is very hard to come by unless you have a famous world name in your film, I've realized that by far with "Brutal Incasso" alone, but you CAN succeed if you struggle enough for it.

Indie horror is another thing. It's probably the only genre you can find distribution even though there's only no-name actors (an ugly expression that I truly dislike, but please bear with me). And let's face it, why make

a film if you know right off hand that you won't get distribution for it?

But, I'm quite sure, as high quality DV cams are getting better and better, and cheaper and cheaper we will definitely see a boom in indie film, and thank God for that! People don't necessarily any longer have a bundle of cash to buy and shoot on 35mm, and the DV tapes are quite cheap to get and with a decent cam you can still get quite remarkable results, so I think there's generally a bright future ahead. Why should only big budget million dollar companies be allowed to make films? I know I'd love to help out coming production in any way I possibly can. I have enormous affections for the indie way of making film.

## **How could one obtain information over you or your movies?**

For general information check out IMDB, or my webpage [www.sonderholm.net](http://www.sonderholm.net), where there's an extensive resume, video clips, and lots of pictures.

## **What's next for Kim Sønderholm?**

In a weeks time I'm starting shooting on a viking epic named "A Viking Saga" here in Denmark. It's in English, and produced by an American company named Mipros. It was written and directed by an American/French/Danish director named Michael Mouyal. It's going to be great to be all savage, drooling, and sword swinging, but it's going to be quite true to a real story, not just a big bang of an action flick. This one WILL actually be inspired by a true story. But anyway, because of this film I'm walking around these days looking like a long haired (well, for my standard anyway), big beared neanderthal, haha..

Other than that, I'm going to Sweden for a couple of days to be in a thriller named "Död vid ankomst" ("Dead on Arrival").

After New Years, I'm going to Florida for a week to be in a sci-fi spoof comedy, a bit like "Mars Attacks" named "Uchuujin from Outer Space". This will also have Lloyd Kaufman and Trent Haaga in other roles. And finally, I've agreed to be in an English produced film that will be filmed in South Africa, in which I'll be playing a mercenary, but I'm afraid I can't really say much more about this project right now; it's still very hush hush.

And then of course, I'm going to finish "Craig". I'm the type of actor who lives to work and not the opposite, so I'm always interested in taking on more assignments.

Finally, I have a bunch of films opening hopefully before Christmas. There's "How To Get Rid Of The Others" by Anders Rønnow-Klarlund, which is a very dark humor policital satire in which I played a supporting role. There's "Pop" by Martin Hagbjer, in which I played a supporting part as a somewhat slimy TV producer. "The Board" by Joe Jenkins, filmed in Southampton, UK earlier this year and then of course "Hellride". There are a few others but time will show about them, and three others that are still in post-production.

## **I see you've worked with David Noel Burke. How was that?**

Short! No it was great, I've been corresponding with David ever since he finished "Last Exit" and now when he started his second project, "No Right Turn", obviously I kept nagging him for a part. Either way, I was on the project shooting the part of a slime ball businessman trying to hook up with the female lead, only to have my balls almost crushed in her hands. Sounds quite pleasant, doesn't it? But it was great; David was a great guy and we had a lot of fun on the set. Would love to work with him again, absolutely.

## **Do you have any last statements you would like to share with our readers?**

I can only encourage people to make the movies they want to make, and don't be discouraged because a big time studio won't sponsor your endeavours. Don't sit in a corner and moan about the lack of money, just get out there and start doing it! In most cases you'll find it's actually possible! Of course, you will have to make compromises, but once the big studios get their fingers on it, you will still have to make them, so decide what's worse.

If I have to give a cliched advice, it will be "If you want success, you gotta work for it, it's not gonna come knocking on your door" Like I said, cliché, but TRUE!

You can read a lot more about me at [www.sonderholm.net/en](http://www.sonderholm.net/en), about some of my films: [www.brutal-incasso.com](http://www.brutal-incasso.com) and [www.hellridethemovie.com](http://www.hellridethemovie.com), and if you're on myspace don't hesitate to visit me at [www.myspace.com/sonderholm](http://www.myspace.com/sonderholm).