

MR UFFE ELBAEK:

We have got a very difficult task, all the guests invited for the conference, we had to come up with a good story for 10 minutes. That's a very sharp timeline and the story should be about a specific event at our education or a special person or a story about a teacher or a student. I have decided to talk about Trina Valentine, who was a graduate at the KaosPilot in the summer of 2005. So it's a story about a student. The reason for choosing Trina as a case is that Trina is a good example in every way of the type of person who applies to the KaosPilot School, namely young people who could be called creative outsiders with a high level of work discipline. Trina is Danish -- and sorry that I didn't bring any visual so you have to imagine the pictures in your own heads right now. Trina is a really smart and bright young woman. She was 21 years old when she began the KaosPilot program. And the KaosPilot program is a three-year bachelor degree in creative business design and social innovation.

During the four years from the time she left secondary school until she started at the KaosPilot, she did the following: travelled around the Middle East, Israel, Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan, learned to become a cook, worked as a director's assistant for the Royal Opera in Copenhagen. When I asked her why she originally why she wanted to apply to the KaosPilots, she responded, "I applied to the KaosPilots because I was convinced that that was absolutely the right kind of education for someone like me, an education that consisted of the right mix of theory and practice. This was especially important for me since I was never very **studious** but on the other hand I have always been good at realising my ideas and dreams. I also expected to meet other creative and ambitious young people similar to myself."

Looking back after completing that three-year program, Trina's most important personal insights acquired during her studies were three things. She said, "You are your own biggest limitation but also your biggest possibility. It is important

that the will to succeed is greater than the fear of failure. If you are passionate about your project and work towards achieving your goal, then what might sound like an impossible idea to others will become reality."

Trina proved all these points to be true when she together with four other female students decided to spend her world internship, which is in the second year of the program, and her final exam project, which is in the third year in Sarajevo in Bosnia. The reality that Trina and her fellow group of students encountered when they landed in Sarajevo for the first time was a city that was still critically wounded, both physically and mentally after the civil war that Bosnia had been through several years earlier. Not least of all the city's youth felt economically, socially and culturally.

This created an absence of hope and dreams for a positive future. Yes, the atmosphere was depressed and this was emphasised by the fact that the youth had no central place to meet, hear music, exhibit art, be creative in any ways and thereby express the views and wishes for the future.

This was a harsh reality Trina and her team had to navigate. But despite not having any politically, economically or organisational support from the city of Sarajevo, they forged ahead and managed to formulate the first action and strategies together with the city's youth.

After a lengthy development process Trina and her team came up with a project plan that consisted of the following elements:

The first element was artistic and creative with the purpose of getting the city's youth and kids to paint their dreams for the future on a huge canvas of 5,000 square metres. This huge painting was then wrapped around the city's bombed out cultural centre. Before the war the centre that lay in the main square of Sarajevo had served as a cultural headquarters for all of Yugoslavia with concert halls, workshops, conference rooms and much more.

But during the war the building was bombed and when Trina and her team of four fellow students arrived in Sarajevo it was in the hands of the Bosnian Mafia. Very much to everyone's surprise the team of students got the permission to rent the bombed out building in Kristalsteil with the future dreams of the city's youth. The event received national and international press average.

Afterwards the students took the huge painting back to Scandinavia where they organised an exhibition about the project at the National Art Museum in downtown Oslo. Some parts of the painting were framed, other parts were hung in their full length and finally other parts were sewn into clothing and accessories by well-known young Norwegian designers. The exhibition was an enormous success and the students ended up selling most of the exhibited items and thereby earned the money needed for the next step of the project.

This time the aim was to take over the culture centre, rebuild it for the youth and not least create a sustainable organisation that would run the centre in the future.

Unlike the first part of the project this phase was very difficult. Altogether the students faced considerably more resistance from both the public authorities and the local Mafia. Because of the massive resistance the students decided to change the strategy and go for arranging a local rock festival revival at the centre.

After much diplomatic persuasion and hard negotiation, the students finally got the permission to rent the building. When the contract was signed they could proceed with the actual projects. Booking local and national music bands, installing water and electricity, repairing big holes in the roof, renting concert equipment, recruiting volunteers, raising money, contacting the press, etc.

What appeared as impossible in the beginning turned out to be a successful three-day rock festival and when the local

protestors and the Mafia saw how many young people participated in the festival they decided to allow for the rebuilding of the centre according to the original purpose, to serve as a city centre cultural establishment not least for the youth.

The cultural centre is now being rebuilt. A revival festival is being held every year and not least, positive of all, the city youth have a role in managing the centre.

When I asked Trina what she had actually learnt from this project she answered, "I learnt everything about leading a big and rather complex project from start to finish. We created an organisation from scratch, we involved the kids and the youth of the city, raised the necessary funds for the project, developed a totally new sponsorship concept and international press strategy. We did all that while experiencing stubborn resistance from both authorities and the local Mafia. We learnt alternatively how important it is to keep up one's spirit when things look the bleakest and not least to keep believing that the impossible is possible. If you just work at it hard enough, and consciously seek luck."

Now, just over a year since graduating from the KaosPilot, Trina is working as a producer for one of Denmark's most progressive theatres, Mongo Park, north of Copenhagen, a dream job, she says, because as a producer she has the opportunity to use everything she learnt during the three-year KaosPilots education. Not least of all to see the possibilities where everyone else just see problems. Thank you.