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Liz Crow: One and Other

9 August 2009

Allan Sutherland reviews Liz Crow's performance in Trafalgar Square on Saturday 8 August

Antony Gormley's 'One & Other' occupies the empty fourth plinth in Trafalgar Square with a living monument. For 100 days, 24 hours a day, the plinth is occupied by a different person every hour, creating what Gormley has described as 'the lens through which we see what the UK is like now'.

Many of the plinthers have used their hour to espouse favourite causes, be it children's charities, bee preservation or understanding of chess. But few, if any, have produced a piece of work as compelling as disabled artist and activist Liz Crow.

Crow's thoughtful piece of work was designed to draw attention to the Nazi programme of killing disabled people, which provided the blueprint for the '[Final Solution](#)'. Crow sees this as having strong current relevance in the context of discussion about pre-natal screenings and assisted suicide.

Crow was lifted into place covered in a white sheet which, hiding her face, reminded me of a shroud. She sat motionless, a mysterious presence overlooking the square. This was really compelling. Plinthers have done many things up there, but this may well have been the first time that anyone has remained completely still. Even the military statues on the other plinths have

visible features.

After five to ten minutes, Crow pulled off the sheet to reveal that she was wearing a Nazi uniform. Again, she sat motionless. After a similar period she pulled out a flag, bearing the words 'First they came for the sick, the so-called incurables and I did not speak out - because I was not ill', which come from an early version of the anti-Nazi theologian Martin Niemoeller's much-quoted statement.

After a while, she pulled off the Nazi regalia, throwing away the swastika armband, and took up the flag again. On a summer's evening, with the flag fluttering in the breeze, the image was reminiscent of Delacroix's 'Liberty Leading the People' (albeit a little more fully-clothed).

Crow's piece will undoubtedly remain one of the most significant contributions to Gormley's project. Apart from the importance of the content, it presented a series of memorable images, carefully choreographed to take advantage of the space and fill the time. It was an extraordinary experience for those of us present in the square, and - as one might expect from a film-maker - works extremely well for the cameras.

To see Liz Crow's performance http://www.oneandother.co.uk/participants/Liz_C

To see extracts from a talk by Liz Crow for Holocaust Memorial Day 2009, giving the historical background to the film-based installation, 'Resistance', go to <http://vimeo.com/3177051>

[For further information about Antony Gormley's One & Other:](#)



Striking image of the artist Liz Crow dressed in nazi uniform for a performance as part Anthony Gormley's 'One and Other', which took place in Trafalgar Square. Image © Liz Crow

Image: Kevin Clifford

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